

The Apostles in Early Christian Art and Poetry

Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae

TEXTS AND STUDIES OF EARLY CHRISTIAN LIFE AND LANGUAGE

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The Apostles in Early Christian Art and Poetry

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In Dei nomine feliciter



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Preface

This book is the revised version of my PhD thesis defended at Radboud University (Nijmegen, the Netherlands) in 2014. I am very pleased that the results of several years of work are now officially published and I therefore thank the editors for including my work in their prestigious series.

Many people have contributed to this book: the members of the PhD committee who shared their thoughts at the defence of my dissertation, fellow scholars who made critical remarks after lectures on parts of the work, my colleagues, who not only helped me out with all kinds of issues but also created an enjoyable work climate at Radboud university and, last but not least, my family and friends.

Sible de Blaauw helped me find my way in the fascinating world of early Christian art and archaeology and proved himself a very amiable supervisor and colleague. Vincent Hunink was always willing to lend his invaluable help for any question concerning any Latin (or Greek) text, from my first years in Nijmegen until now. His kindness has been heartwarming. Suzanne was my perfect roommate for most of the period. Erik read the whole manuscript and has been an intellectual sparring-partner since we met as undergraduates.

The research was made much easier by Arnold Provoost, who kindly put his database at my disposal. Christian Gnirke shared his knowledge of Prudentius. I thank the Centre for Art Historical Documentation (CAHD) for help with the images. I am very happy that the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome and the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World in New York welcomed me as their guest during my PhD project. OIKOS greatly contributed to my training as a PhD student. My alma mater, Radboud University, deserves my gratitude for providing me with the opportunity to do this research and work on this book.

Finally, I want to thank Sophie, who contributed to this book by making me happy. I dedicate this book to her.

Abbreviations

Blaise	A. Blaise. 1954–1967. <i>Dictionnaire latin-français des auteurs chrétiens</i> . Turnhout, Brepols (revu et corrigé sous la direction de Paul Tombeur, 2005).
DACL	F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq. 1907–1953. <i>Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie</i> . Paris, Librairie Letouzey et Ané.
EEC	E. Ferguson. 1997. <i>Encyclopedia of Early Christianity. Second Edition</i> . New York (etc.), Garland.
Fnumber	Refers to a fresco ensemble in Provoost (2011a, b, c).
ICA	<i>Index of Christian Art</i> .
LACL	S. Döpp, W. Geerlings. 2002. <i>Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur</i> . Freiburg, Herder.
LCI	E. Kirschbaum. 2012 (1968–1976). <i>Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie</i> . S.I., Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
L&S	C. T. Lewis, C. Short. 1933 (1879). <i>A Latin Dictionary</i> . Oxford University Press, Oxford.
LThK	W. Kasper <i>et alii</i> . 2009 (1993–2001). <i>Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche. Dritte, völlig neu bearbeitete Auflage</i> . Freiburg (etc.), Herder.
Morey	Morey (1959).
OLD	P. G. W. Glare. 2006 (1996). <i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> . Oxford, Clarendon Press.
PG	J. P. Migne. 1857–1866. <i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Graeca</i> . Paris, Imprimerie Catholique.
PL	J. P. Migne. 1862–1865. <i>Patrologia cursus completus. Series Latina</i> . Paris, Imprimerie Catholique.
Snumber	Refers to a sarcophagus in Provoost (2011a, b, c).
Souter	A. Souter. 1949. <i>A glossary of later Latin to 600 AD</i> . Oxford, Clarendon Press.
TIP	F. Bisconti. 2000. <i>Temi di Iconografia Paleocristiana</i> . Cura e introduzione di Fabrizio Bisconti. Città del Vaticano, Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana.
Neue Pauly	H. Cancik, H. Schneider, M. Landfester. <i>Der Neue Pauly</i> = Brill's <i>New Pauly</i> . Brill online.
RAC	T. Klauser <i>et alii</i> . 1941–. <i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum: Sachwörterbuch zur Auseinandersetzung des Christentums mit der antiken Welt</i> . Bonn, Franz-Joseph-Dölger Institut.

- RE A. F. von Pauly, G. Wissowa *et alii*. 1894–1997. *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart/München, Metzler/Druckenmüller.
- Rep *Repertorium der christlich-antiken Sarkophage*: 1 = Deichmann (1967), 2 = Dresken-Weiland (1998), 3 = Christern-Briesenick (2003).

Abbreviations of Christian works and authors follow the LACL, those of classical authors follow L&S and the Greek-English Lexicon by H. G. Liddell, R. Scott and H. S. Jones (Oxford, 1996). For the Biblical books, the abbreviations recommended by the Journal of Early Christian Studies are used. Translations from the Bible are based on the New International Version: THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.* Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Other translations are specified in a footnote at their first occurrence.

References to fig. A, B, C (etc.) refer to figures in the main text, references to figs. 1, 2, 3 (etc.) refer to the images included in *Appendix 3: Figures*. The abbreviation *fig.* (in italics) refers to a figure in other literature.

Introduction

In recent decades, a more favourable view of the late antique (or early Christian) period has won the hearts and minds of a growing number of scholars and has reshaped the appreciation for the first centuries of our era. All aspects of this fascinating period of transformation are now actively studied, often from an interdisciplinary perspective. Poetry and the visual arts, which both underwent major changes in style, themes and use, are naturally part of this trend. One of the main objectives of many late antique scholars has been to change the traditional view of decline which has held the study of late antique—including early Christian—art and poetry in a stranglehold for such a long time. One of the scholars who have contributed to this revaluation of the period is Michael Roberts.

In 1989, he published a book in which he attributed to the art and literature of late antiquity an aesthetics that he called “the jeweled style”.¹ He revealed a late antique preference for the particular over the whole. Late antique culture paid much attention to small parts of art and literature. These were often inserted into grander compositions, without losing their separate meaning and importance, which transcended that of the context as a whole. This trend pervaded not only pagan, but also Christian literature and art in late antiquity.² Roberts’ thought-provoking book stimulated the debate about specific late antique aesthetics as a common ground for different forms of art in the period. Other scholars, among whom are Marco Formisano and Aaron Pelttari, have built upon his work.³ Roberts’ ideas as well as the highly

-
- 1 Roberts (1989). The book provoked diverging reactions: the scathing criticism of Hall (1991) seems to be partly motivated by the reviewer’s depreciation for late antique poetry, but he is right in emphasising the small amount of text fragments on which Roberts’ considerable claims are based (see below). McDonough (1991) provides a fairer appreciation of Roberts’ innovative insights. Cf. 4.2.1. The term ‘art’ is consistently used for the visual arts in contrast with literature, for the sake of convenience.
 - 2 The term ‘pagan’ is problematic, but I use it for the sake of clarity and convenience. Moreover, every alternative would be debatable as well. For a discussion and reasonable defence of the term ‘pagan’ see Cameron (2011) 25–32. Pagan is more aptly defined as ‘secular’, i.e. following the classical tradition in which the Olympian gods play an important role as a literary device, than as ‘heathen’, the traditional designation of pagans by the Christians. The latter term suggests a kind of belief in the classical pantheon that seems to have been left behind by most aristocrats of late antiquity.
 - 3 See e.g. Pelttari (2014), focusing on poetry only, Formisano (2014) and id. (2007). Cf. Brown (2011) for an overview of the field of late antique studies. For the relationship between word and image see 4.2 below.

interesting history of the late antique period stimulated me to undertake the PhD-project that has resulted in this book.

The work by Roberts and others has shown that the aesthetics of Christian and pagan art certainly were comparable in late antiquity. Pagan elements were introduced in Christian art, taken as *spolia* from ancient monuments, and these elements were highly appreciated: the so-called “cumulative aesthetics” of late antiquity.⁴ It seems impossible to discern a Christian (more spiritual) style or aesthetics in late antique Christian art. This style would imply an unrealistic separation of early Christian and pagan art and culture.⁵ Pagan and Christian art could therefore only be distinguished on the base of their subject matter. Even then, one must take into account the fact that late antique culture was imbued with pagan imagery, which made it also a common element of Christian art.

The efforts made by Roberts and others notwithstanding, the exact nature of the relationship between these two media remains hard to grasp. One of the reasons is the variety of visual and textual sources, which include not only many forms and genres, but also spread different messages. In an attempt to at least partly overcome these problems I have tried to shed light on the relationship of art and poetry by focusing on similarities in themes and subjects in both fields.

The apostles are chosen as a case study. As a group of Biblical characters who were commonly known among Christians in late antiquity they were regularly referred to in art and poetry. The apostles already appear in the earliest example of Christian figurative art that is still extant—the ensemble of paintings in a house church in Dura Europos—and they are also mentioned in the earliest pieces of Christian poetry, written by Commodianus.⁶ As eyewitnesses of Christ’s life on earth, the apostles could hardly be ignored in representations of Christian culture.

The two parts of this book are different in structure. In the first part, references to the apostles in Greek and Latin poetry are discussed per author, in chronological order. All relevant passages are commented upon and related to the position of the apostles in the rest of the author’s oeuvre. In a concluding section (1.13) the results are presented together. The corpus of visual representations of the apostles is discussed via iconographical themes, based

4 Elsner (2004) 304–9.

5 Cf. Cameron (2005) 4 and Cameron (2011) 691–732.

6 See 1.1 for a discussion of the (much disputed) dating of this poet. The painting from Dura is discussed in 2.1.3.1.3.

on the material presented in the abundant literature and *repertoria* of early Christian art. This part is divided in a section on canonical and a section on non-canonical apostle stories. Within these sections the material is ordered per apostle. If any parallel with the poetic corpus can be established, it is directly mentioned with the presentation of the visual material, in order to avoid a repetitive third part. A general conclusion reflects on the results from the foregoing chapters and their relation to the considerations expounded in the introduction.

This introduction elaborates on the apostles in early Christian culture and presents the corpus that is investigated. By means of the so-called “circuit of culture” it is tried to provide a framework which gives some context to the texts and images discussed. Finally, a brief *status quaestionis* of the research that has already been done on the apostles in early Christian art and poetry and on the relationship between word and image in the same period is presented.

1 The Apostles

The disciples are generally understood to be a group of twelve men who stayed close to Christ when he was on earth. They are prominently present in the New Testament: in the gospels in particular, but also (especially Peter and Paul) in the canonical book of Acts. Despite their prominence, the actual nature and number of disciples of Christ has never been undisputed. In the New Testament, the twelve are called μαθηταί (‘pupils’) when they are with Jesus on earth and ἀπόστολοι (‘apostles’, those who have been sent, i.e. sent into the world) after the Ascension.⁷

Paul was not a disciple of Christ in the narrow sense of the word, since he was converted only after the Ascension, as the order of Luke’s account in the Acts of the apostles reveals.⁸ Nevertheless, Paul was considered as the ‘thirteenth apostle’ from early times onwards, because of his importance for the Church. Not only was he added to the twelve, he even replaced one of the other apostles. Significantly, the emperor Constantine was buried surrounded by

⁷ Sullivan (2001) 18. Cf. EEC 88–90 s.v. Apostle (Ferguson).

⁸ See Guenther (1985) 5–9. Acts 1.21–2 contain Luke’s ‘definition’ of an apostle; in Acts 14.4–15 the evangelist uses the word ἀπόστολοι, to refer to Barnabas and Paul. He also emphasises the human nature of Paul and Barnabas (see Acts 14.15, where Paul says: καὶ ἡμεῖς ὁμοιωθεὶς ἐσμεν ὑμῖν ἄνθρωποι εὐαγγελιζόμενοι ὑμᾶς (...)). Concise but instructive on the difference between the Lukan and Pauline definition of an apostle: Matthews (2002) 4–8.

cenotaphs of the twelve apostles in the Church of the Holy Apostles, and Paul was certainly meant to be one of them.⁹ Paul presented himself as an apostle.¹⁰

In conformity with modern usage, I use the terms ‘disciple’ and ‘apostle’ indiscriminately for members of the group of most important followers of Christ, including Paul: Andrew, Bartholomew, James (son of Alphaeus), James (son of Zebedee), John, Judas, Matthew, Matthias, Paul, Peter, Philip, Simon, Thaddeus (also called Lebbaeus and Judas) and Thomas.¹¹ There were actually many more followers of Christ according to the Biblical account, but the twelve men mentioned in the apostle lists in the gospels¹² and Paul were generally accepted as most important in the early Church, although they remained largely anonymous men in the Bible.¹³ ‘The twelve’ soon became a *terminus technicus*.

9 See Staats (2008) 358–61 about Constantine as the thirteenth apostle and *passim* for the influence of Pauline writings on Constantine’s politics. Cf. about the meaning of Constantine’s burial place with the apostles Stockmeier (1980). Inspired by Constantine’s church, Rufinus built an *apostoleion* for some relics of Peter and Paul and his own mausoleum next to it in Chalcedon, see Bowes (2008) 112.

10 Rom 1.1–5; Gal 1.1. Cf. e.g. 1 Cor 15.9 (Paul writes that he is not worth to be called an apostle, implying that some people considered him to be one) and 1 Cor 9.1–2 (“Am I not an apostle?”). Other early Christian writers referring to Paul as an apostle are e.g. Ignatius of Antioch (*ep. Rom.* 4.3) and Clement of Rome (1 Clement 5.3–5). Guenther (1985) suggested that they did not know the Lukan tradition (p. 9), but maybe they simply ignored it, since Paul was one of the more important and appealing figures of the New Testament and Luke is not explicit in his denial of Paul’s apostleship. Cf. Korteweg (2004).

11 There is discussion about the position of Thaddeus, who in some of the oldest apostle catalogues, in Luke and in the Acts is replaced by a certain Judas, relative of James, see RAC 19,328–9 s.v. Jünger (Kany). In some traditions Cephas is considered a disciple, instead of an Aramaic name for Peter, see Ehrman (1990). Both discussions were of no significant influence on the representation of the apostles in early Christian art and poetry.

12 Matt 26.47; Mark 14.10, 43; Luke 22.3 and 22.47; John 6.71.

13 See Burnet (2014) 13–37 for a discussion of some general aspects concerning the twelve. His large monograph includes elaborate biographies of all the twelve apostles, focusing on their reception in the early Church. On p. 17 different groups surrounding Christ are presented with the respective Greek words used in the Bible to designate them. See also TRE 3,430–45 s.v. Apostel/Apostolat/Apostolizität (Hartman) for the apostles in the Bible and id. 445–66 for the apostles in the early Church. Cf. e.g. Eusebius, *h.e.* 1.12: Τῶν γε μὴν τοῦ σωτήρος ἀποστόλων παντί τῳ σαφῆς ἐκ τῶν εὐαγγελίων ἢ πρόσρησις (‘Now the names of the apostles of our Saviour are plain to everyone from the Gospels’) and εἶθ’ ὡς παρὰ τούτους κατὰ μίμησιν τῶν δώδεκα πλείστων ὅσων ὑπαρξάντων ἀποστόλων, οἷος καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Παῦλος ἦν (‘as though in addition to these there had been numberless apostles, on the model of the twelve, like Paul himself’). Text and translation: Lake (2001). Lists of all apostles and other

The status of a man called Nathanael (John 1.45–50; John 21.1) is unclear: in modern times he is often identified with Bartholomew, but in antiquity opinions differ about the question whether he had to be considered an apostle at all. Moreover, the *Epistula apostolorum*, probably written in the mid-second century pretends to be written by ten apostles, among whom are Bartholomew and Nathanael.¹⁴ For the sake of completeness, the figure of Nathanael is included in this investigation.

The disciple Judas Iscariot was replaced by Matthias (Acts 1.18–26), but only after the Ascension. He is mentioned in all apostle lists: since he clearly was a witness of Christ's earthly presence, he fitted the definition which was also maintained for the other apostles. Although Matthias naturally did not see Christ on earth, the number of twelve disciples was strongly emphasised in early Christianity. Therefore, he was considered one of the twelve (although Paul often replaced him), but completing the number was his main characteristic.¹⁵ In apocryphal writings, Matthias is sometimes confused with Matthew.¹⁶

'Bible' and 'Biblical' are anachronistic terms, but they are useful nonetheless, since the canon was more or less fixed in the fourth century (see 2.1). Most importantly, the books in which the apostles play a role as acting characters were all broadly considered canonical (a well-known exception is the Marcionite movement only accepting the gospel of Luke as genuine).

The apostles were more than witnesses of historical events. They were also mobilised to legitimise the hierarchical position of the bishops, in particular that of the bishop of Rome.¹⁷ Jesus Christ was naturally seen as the founder of the Christian religion, but the Roman Church in particular presented the apostle Peter as the founder of the Church, based on texts such as Matthew 16.18–9: "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever

followers of Christ began to appear at the end of the fourth century, see Dolbeau (2012) 171, who assembled several studies on ancient (mostly mediaeval) apostle lists in his book.

14 *Ep. Ap.* 2. For references to Nathanael in ancient literature see Holzmeister (1940). Cf. Bejarano (1998) 118–9 (note 94). In the Greek tradition, Nathanael is sometimes equalled to Simon the Canaanite, see LThK 7 s.v. Natanael (Pesch). See now also Burnet (2014) 452–5.

15 Cf. Burnet (2014) 661–71. It is the shortest chapter of his book on the apostles and its title is revealing: "Matthias, l'apôtre de secours". Cf. id. p. 661: "C'est un personnage vide, qui n'est là que pour remplir une place."

16 See De Santos Otero (1999⁶) 414–5.

17 See e.g. RAC 12,1148–55 s.v. Gründer (Cornell and Speyer).

you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”¹⁸ This passage appears in the literature of the early Church from the second century onwards.¹⁹ It was one of the most outspoken Biblical passages that was used in the construction of an ecclesiastical hierarchy in early Christianity, although different (groups of) Churches had different interpretations of the text. However, Peter was also connected to Rome apart from hierarchical issues, since this city (and therefore also its bishop) was held in esteem for more reasons than the Roman martyrdom of Peter alone. Especially from the episcopate of the Roman bishop and poet Damasus onwards, these two lines of thought were combined by the Roman clergy in order to promote the prominent position of the Roman episcopate.²⁰

The question of the historicity of Peter’s stay in Rome has aroused (renewed) debate in recent years and resulted in several studies which focus on textual evidence for Peter’s connection with the city of Rome.²¹ However, in the third and fourth centuries Peter’s former presence and martyrdom in Rome were generally accepted as genuine historical facts: whether or not these events actually took place is not important for the study of their reception.

Along with Peter, the other apostles also received a prominent place in early Christian culture. They were bearers of the apostolic tradition that was the connection between Christ and the Church in later times.²² The universalism of the Christian religion, expressed in the New Testament by the story of Christ sending the apostles out into the world, probably contributed to the apostles’ position.²³ Cyprian emphasised the importance of the apostles for the unity of the Church in his *De unitate ecclesiae*.²⁴

The apostles were not only characters within the Biblical narrative: they were also believed to have been the authors of parts of the Christian holy book. Several parts of the New Testament were ascribed to them: the gospels

18 For translations of Biblical texts I cite the New International Version, unless stated otherwise.

19 For the role of this passage in the early Church see e.g. Ludwig (1952). Cf. also Pietri (1976) 272–7 (for the position of Peter in the early Church) and 1445–50 (more specifically about Matt 16.18–9).

20 Pietri (1976) 1495–1523, p. 1516 in particular. See also 1.5.

21 E.g. Zwierlein (2010²) and Bockmuehl (2010), esp. pp. 114–32.

22 Id. 295–314. Significantly, Jerome starts his *De uiris illustribus* with Peter and has only apostles or other persons related to them among the first nine famous men of his account.

23 See Buchheit (1998), esp. pp. 37–8.

24 Cf. e.g. Poirier, Mattei et al. (2006) 102–3 and 113 for a summary of the main argument of the work.

of Matthew and John, the letters of Paul, Peter, James and John and the Revelation of John. Moreover, the evangelists Mark and Luke were said to have been closely related to Peter and Paul. The authority of canonical texts was much discussed in early Christianity and their content was part of the quarrels between the general Church and other Christian groups that were put aside by the former as heretic. Through the apostles' (supposed) authorship of holy texts and the doctrine exposed in them, they were the subject of discussion in many ecclesiastical disputes.

The rise of the cult of the saints was another development that influenced the status of the apostles. Especially in the second half of the fourth century the veneration of saints increased: churches were devoted to individual saints and the (alleged) graves of martyrs became places of worship. The apostles naturally were part of this development, especially Peter and Paul. The interest in the cult of the saints lay not only with its religious aspects, but also had a clear political dimension. Relics and martyr graves became political instruments, effectively applied by emperors, senators and bishops.²⁵ All these aspects contributed to the importance of the apostles for almost every section of late antique society.²⁶

Two apostles were not only witnesses of Christ, they also (allegedly) wrote down the account of his life: Matthew and John. The person of the evangelist and the apostle can hardly be separated, since they were considered one person in antiquity. Whenever an individual apostle is depicted or described as a writer, this representation is included in this book. However, references to *evangelistae* or representations of the four evangelists together are not included, since they are part of a different imagery:²⁷ in those cases, the apostle 'disappeared' behind the evangelist, most clearly expressed by the representation of the evangelists as a human being (Matthew), a lion (Mark), an ox (Luke) and an eagle (John).

25 See e.g. Thacker (2012), emphasising the primary role that emperors and senators had (in Rome). Cf. Lønstrup Dal Santo's work on the connection between *concordia apostolorum* and *concordia augustorum*, most recently in id. (2015).

26 Cf. RAC 19 s.v. Jünger (Kany), especially section IV ("Deutungen der Jünger Jesu", pp. 311–28).

27 See the LCI 1 s.v. *Evangelisten* B (Nilgen). The evangelists are hardly depicted as such before the year 400.

2 *Status quaestionis* of the Presence of the Apostles in Early Christian Art and Poetry

This study will depart from the presence of the apostles in poetry, which has not received much attention from modern scholars. A study by Paul-Augustin Deproost, dealing with the sixth-century author Arator, is exceptional as a monograph devoted to the role of an apostle in a poem from late antique or early medieval poetry.²⁸ With regards to poets from our period the interest is nearly always in the role of Peter and Paul in a limited set of poems, mainly Damasus' epigram 20, Ambrose's hymn 12 and Prudentius' *Peristephanon* 12. This can partly be explained by the lack of (modern or easily accessible) commentaries on most of early Christian poetry. The poetry of the three authors mentioned above is relatively well documented, even if important parts of Prudentius' oeuvre still need to be investigated more extensively.²⁹ This study is the first to present an analysis of passages in which the apostles are named in poetry up to the year 408 (in which Paulinus published his last known poem).

Of course, the large number of studies on early Christian poetry in general provides a useful context for the present work.³⁰ The use of classical literature by Christians and its place in early Christian culture has received due attention. The genre of the Biblical epic has been discussed especially with regards to its origins.³¹ The most remarkable genre of the cento has also been an object

28 Deproost (1990): he succinctly discusses the representation of Peter in Damasus, Ambrose, Prudentius and Paulinus on pp. 101–16. Burnet's recent, voluminous book on the reception of the apostles only incidentally discusses poetic sources: Burnet (2014).

29 Important commentaries used in this book are Reutter (2009) and Ferrua (1942) on Damasus; Fontaine (1992) on Ambrose; Palmer (1989) and Fux (2003)—on the *Peristephanon*—, Pillinger (1980)—on the *Dittochaeon*—and Gnllka (2000–1)—although not a commentary in the proper sense—for Prudentius. Other important studies include Hack (1997), Brändle (1992) and Chadwick (1962) on Damasus; Klein (2001), Smolak (2001) and Ruysschaert (1966) on Prudentius. Paulinus has been studied recently by Piras (2001) and Trout (1999) among others.

30 E.g. the monographs of Roberts (1989) and Fontaine (1981). Several shorter studies discuss the characteristics of early Christian and late antique literature, more recently e.g. Mastrangelo (2009), Roberts (2007), Stella (2007), Cameron (2006)—about the less covered Greek poetry of late antiquity—Cameron (2004) and Gärtner (2004).

31 Green (2006) discusses the Biblical epics of Juvenius, Sedulius and Arator. Cf. about the origins of the Biblical epic the study by Roberts (1985), responding to Herzog (1975), who responded to RAC s.v. Epos (Thraede) among others. See also Kirsch (1978).

of study.³² Despite their genuine interest, these studies do not provide (nor do they aim at doing so) a picture of the representation of the apostles in poetry.

The study of early Christian poetry has not become a discipline of its own, but remains part of studies on late antique poetry in general. The lack of studies on the presence of the apostles in early Christian poetry might be partly explained by this situation. In contrast, early Christian archaeology has succeeded in becoming a widely recognised field of research. The theological and Church-historical importance of Peter and Paul has stimulated much debate about their presence in early Christian art. Moreover, art-historical interests also incited research on the representation of the apostles.³³ Both kinds of studies clearly show a preference for the representation of the apostles Peter and Paul over that of the other apostles.³⁴ Recently, some monographs have been devoted to Paul alone, providing a vast overview of Pauline imagery.³⁵

Monographs specifically devoted to all apostles in art are rarer, however, and date from the end of the nineteenth and very beginning of the twentieth century.³⁶ Johannes Ficker discussed the representation of the apostles in art in 1887: his book offers a valuable overview of possible sources for the depiction of the apostles and the number of references (also to poetry) is impressive. Ficker does not, however, focus on the repertoire of narrative scenes with the apostles but rather on their outer appearance. When Ficker discusses themes in art, he often compares the repertoire of figurative images to the Biblical stories referred to in prayers for the dead in the early Church (the *commendatio*

32 See especially Bažil (2009) and most recently Schottenius Cullhed, S. (2015). *Proba the prophet: the Christian virgilian cento of Faltonia Betitia Proba*. Leiden (etc.), Brill. The latter has only cursorily been consulted for this study, but is unlikely to influence its results.

33 Most importantly on the twelve apostles: Mazzei (2010); Cartlidge and Elliott (2001) 172–235; Zanker (1995) 284–8; LCI 1 s.v. Apostel (Myslivec), esp. pp. 150–60; Fabricius (1956) 90–114; Ficker (1887). Useful information is found in lexica such as the LCI and ICA (for which see 4.2.2.4).

34 See e.g. Spier (2007) 237–52, Cartlidge and Elliott (2001) 134–71 and, with a specific focus on the *concordia* between the two apostles, Lønstrup (2010), Huskinson (1982) and Pietri (1976) 1571–96. See also Bisconti (2001) and the collection of essays of which this publication is part (*Pietro e Paolo. Il loro rapporto con Roma nelle testimonianze antiche. XXIX Incontro di studiosi dell'antichità cristiana*). An extensive discussion of Peter's representation alone in the visual arts is Dinkler (1939). Several publications discuss one specific scene in Christian art in which Peter is one of the main figures: they are mentioned in 2.1 and 2.2 *a.l.*

35 Uggeri (2010) and Utro (2009).

36 Weis-Liebersdorf (1902), especially the second part (pp. 63–124), and Ficker (1887).

animae),³⁷ but without discussion of the precise relationship between the two. Ficker seems to discuss all material until the sixth century, but the chronology of developments in his study is often confusing (almost inevitably so, due to the lack of *repertoria* and other collections of early Christian images to which he could refer). Although he addresses different categories of early Christian art, Ficker does not pay much attention to the production process and questions concerning the visibility of objects. Ficker's focus on the outer appearance of the apostles is even more strictly followed in the equally positivistic work of J. E. Weis-Liebersdorf (1902). He heavily criticises Ficker's book because the latter used drawings and bad photographs of the works of art he discussed. Both Ficker and Weis-Liebersdorf cover less material than is available now and do not offer much information about selection, context and dating of the evidence. Moreover, the dating they do give is often rejected by today's scholarship. Weis-Liebersdorf dates various objects much too early, partly on dubious stylistic grounds.³⁸

Since the features of individual apostles are difficult to distinguish in early Christian art (except those of Peter and Paul), they have only rarely been object of study in later times. The representation of Andrew is a notable exception, although the first distinctive depiction of this apostle is not traced before the year 400.³⁹ Recently, the so-called catacombs of Thecla were discovered in Rome, allegedly containing the first distinguishable portraits of Andrew and John.⁴⁰ Several studies have appeared that discuss the general representation of one apostle throughout the ages, often focusing on prose literature. Besides the abundant attention for Peter and Paul,⁴¹ monographs have been written

37 See for text and discussion of the *commendatio animae* e.g. Tkacz (2002) 109–30 (pp. 130–7 for the possible connection between the *commendatio animae* and the programme of the Lipsanoteca of Brescia). Only one reference to the New Testament is included in the prayer: *Libera, domine, animam eius, sicut liberasti / Petrum et Paulum de carceribus*. The prayer is therefore less important for the purpose of this study. Moreover, I agree with Dassmann (1973) that a direct influence seems less plausible than an indirect one (see p. 65): “Trotzdem braucht nicht bestritten zu werden, daß eine gewisse Ähnlichkeit bezüglich der Auswahl der biblischen Beispiele in den Paradigmengebeten und der frühchristlichen Kunst besteht, ohne daß die Gebete jedoch als direkte Quelle des Bilderkanons bezeichnet werden könnten.”

38 E.g. the ivory pyxis from Berlin that, according to the German scholar, could not date from the fifth century because of its high quality: Weis-Liebersdorf (1902) 98–102.

39 Pillinger (1994).

40 Mazzei (2010). Wilpert (1929–1936c) 352 recognised James the Great, Andrew and John on several early Christian sarcophagi, but I fail to see how he could identify them.

41 For Paul, see recently Eastman (2011). For Peter, see above.

on the early Christian presence of Andrew,⁴² Judas,⁴³ Philip⁴⁴ and Thomas.⁴⁵ They are concerned most often with the role of the apostles in theological debates and their role in the cult of the saints. Given their rather restricted role in late antiquity, the focus is in most cases on the (early) Middle ages and not on the early Christian period. Recently, however, Régis Burnet published an extensive monograph on the twelve apostles in which he meticulously traces the origins of their traditions, especially in the first centuries AD.⁴⁶ All apostles find a prominent place in specialised encyclopaedias and other publications discussing early Christianity.⁴⁷ These are very useful studies to complete and contextualise the present study towards the apostles' representation in early Christian poetry and art.

Many broader studies on early Christian art offer valuable information for an analysis of the representation of the apostles, e.g. studies on the aesthetics, production and consumption of early Christian art.⁴⁸ Recently, Arnold Provoost published a useful inventory of funerary art from the first centuries of our era.⁴⁹ Provoost distinguishes seven thematic ensembles in which images appear.⁵⁰

Provoost also discusses the interpretation of early Christian art. He rejects the common theory of salvation paradigm that emphasises the ubiquity of references to an afterlife in images found on sarcophagi and in the catacombs (often based on typological readings of the imagery) and the influence of prayers for the dead in the early Church. He detects a methodological flaw in both theories:⁵¹ scholars only take the potential meaning of scenes into

42 Dvornik (1958), cf. Pillinger (1994).

43 Meyer (2007), Aalbers (2001). See also Stotz (2004). Many other publications discuss the recently discovered Gospel of Judas, e.g. Painchaud (2011) and DeConinck (2007).

44 Matthews (2002).

45 Most (2005).

46 Burnet (2014).

47 E.g. the RAC, the Catholic Encyclopedia or the LThK.

48 Some useful works are Elsner (2007), Elliott (2003), Elsner (1998), Engemann (1997), Tristan (1996), Mathews (1995) and Elsner (1995). Drewer (1996) provides an overview of secondary literature. Spier (2007) and Weitzmann (1979) are major catalogues of exhibitions of early Christian art and contain much material.

49 Provoost (2011abc). The material is currently being revised. An earlier unpublished revision of 2014 is referred to if necessary.

50 The English translations of the seven ensembles ("krachtvelden") are: decorative/idealistic/bucolic, Biblical-ecclesiastical, symbols, *realia*, artistic, *orans*, pagan. See Provoost (2011a) 17–24 for the data, cf. Provoost (2009) 87–141.

51 Provoost (2011a) 168.

account and overlook the “actualised meaning”, which can only be deduced from the visual and textual (Provoost refers to inscriptions) context of the images. Provoost attempts to solve this problem by arranging images in ensembles of imagery that express certain ideas, since programmatic imagery is lacking on most sarcophagi and catacomb paintings. In his view, the themes of peace, love and happiness determined the imagery of early Christian art.⁵²

Provoost’s themes indeed seem to have played a role, but remain rather vague. Moreover, the attribution of meaning to an ensemble in my opinion is not a much more reliable estimation of the reception of images than an analysis of early Christian literature in order to reveal (typological) ideas connected to separate scenes depicted in art. For example, inscriptions on sarcophagi are not necessarily linked to the imagery. People who could not read certainly did not use them for their interpretation of the images. Provoost’s approach does not seem to solve the problem of potential and actualised meaning, since all elements of a sarcophagus are provided by the commissioner.

The reception of an image by the ancient viewer in any case remains difficult to grasp. However, the discussion of the circuit of culture is hoped to provide some further clues for the interpretation of the images, both of their potential and actualised meaning. Moreover, the large scale analysis of one specific subject, which is offered in this study, hopefully will be able to contribute to a better comprehension of the function of images in early Christian art. The function of representations of the apostles in poetry, which was originating in the same circles as early Christian art (see below), can help to determine the meaning of scenes of the apostles.

The transformation of classical into late antique art has been fruitfully discussed in modern literature, including the categories of ‘classical’ and ‘late antique’. Elsner, among others, has insisted on the importance of studying secular (pagan) art and Christian art together.⁵³ The way in which the apostles were depicted reflects the tendency towards a less naturalistic and more ‘spiritual’, abstract style which is one of the most obvious characteristics of late antique art.⁵⁴ This has been explained from the growing appreciation for the visual and the function of images as intermediaries between earth and heaven. The holiness of the subject depicted was partly absorbed by the image.⁵⁵ Related to this kind of research, much work has been done on the topic of the power

⁵² Id. 169–70.

⁵³ Elsner (2004) 276–7.

⁵⁴ It has also been compared to modern art, see Onians (1980) 23.

⁵⁵ Cf. Francis (2003b) 584–91, including a discussion of the important contributions by Elsner, here Elsner (1995).

of images in antiquity.⁵⁶ The mere presence of an image depicting something that (allegedly) had happened, contributed to the assumed authenticity of an event.⁵⁷ The aspect of visibility has also deserved just attention: it is dealt with below.

In a study addressing the representation of the apostles, the difference between canonical and non-canonical sources must be taken into account. Apocryphal literature, i.e. literature that was not part of the canon, but in subject matter was closely associated to it,⁵⁸ has often been considered an expression of the thoughts and ideas of the people, as opposed to those of the higher clergy.⁵⁹ However, the attitude of the clergy towards the apocrypha was ambivalent: the men of the Church did not oppose so much to the apocrypha as such, but to the use of apocrypha that contained ideas that did not correspond to those of the Church. They also had objections against the use of non-canonical texts during mass. However, apocryphal stories could be used for educational purposes.⁶⁰ Although apocryphal texts were absent from the official liturgy, some stories gained a considerable popularity. The Church could make use of existing apocryphal stories to propagate its own ideas, as long as the apocryphal stories did not contradict orthodoxy or promote matters that were interpreted as heresy.

Stories from the New Testament apocrypha were more popular in art than those related to the Old.⁶¹ This seems to be in accordance with the popularity of New Testament scenes in early Christian art. Stories from the Old Testament were used in the first period of Christian art production (the third century) in particular and are therefore seen more often in the catacombs than on sarcophagi.⁶²

56 Notably Zanker (1987).

57 Cf. Spieser (2011) 108 about cycles of images: "Il reste que la volonté d'inscrire dans l'histoire les faits montrés et de redoubler par l'image la véracité de ce qui était lu et entendu, a joué un rôle important dans le déploiement de ces cycles."

58 Cf. LThK 1,823 s.v. Apokryphen (Bauer): "A. sind 'geheime' Schriften, die nicht in den Bibelmanon gelangten, aber dem Titel bzw. der angebl. Herkunft nach (atl. od. ntl. Person) dahin zu gehören beanspruchen (können)."

59 Cf. Fabricius (1956) in his book on the influence of apocrypha and pseudepigrapha on early Christian art, p. 29: "(...) die folgenden Untersuchungen werden beweisen, daß die darstellenden Künstler als Stimme des Kirchenvolkes aussprachen, was in ihren Herzen lebt."

60 Cartlidge and Elliott (2001) 6.

61 Fabricius (1956) 33.

62 See e.g. Dresken-Weiland (2011b).

Apart from two major studies devoted to the relationship between the apocrypha and early Christian art alone, several case studies have investigated the role of apocryphal stories about the apostles in the art of late antiquity.⁶³ However, the influence of apocrypha on poetry (or vice versa) has not attracted much attention from scholars, especially not as a subject of research on its own.⁶⁴ Recently, Dresken-Weiland has made renewed study of images in their context, frequently addressing apocryphal depictions of the apostles (Peter in particular).⁶⁵

3 Definition of the Corpus

The emergence of representations of the apostles in the fields of art and poetry took place around the same time: in the middle of the third century. Clearly, the potential of art and poetry was not immediately fully explored. The production of Roman sarcophagi and catacomb paintings—the two largest groups of figuratively decorated objects from the early Christian period—came to an end around the year 400.⁶⁶ Moreover, early Christian poetry reached its first peak in these days with the much celebrated authors Prudentius and Paulinus of Nola.⁶⁷ This study therefore investigates the representation of the apostles from its very beginnings in the third century until the end of the fourth century. In the fourth century the production of art and poetry was considerably larger than before and the apostles were more often referred to in both media: inevitably, therefore, this study focuses on this period.

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- 63 General studies include Cartlidge and Elliott (2001) and Fabricius (1956), also Elliott (2003). Case studies include Stuhlfauth (1925) and Weis-Liebersdorf (1902), which both explicitly address the relationship of art and apocrypha. Numerous studies devoted to the representation of Peter and Paul in early Christian art of course also discuss apocryphal stories that are visualised. The interest in apocryphal literature in general is reflected e.g. by the existence of the journal “Apocrypha: revue internationale des littératures Apocryphes”, published since 1990.
 - 64 For a few exceptions, see above. It goes without saying that references to apocryphal stories in poetry are mentioned in commentaries and other studies on early Christian poems.
 - 65 ‘Old school’ studies include Ficker (1887) and Weis-Liebersdorf (1902), but cf. also Pillinger (1994). Recently see e.g. Dresken-Weiland (2011a).
 - 66 See Brandenburg (2004) and Koch (2000) 5 on sarcophagi and Fiocchi, Bisconti et al. (2000²) 57–9 on the paintings in the catacombs. Maybe the sack of Rome in 410 (and 455) was of influence on the halt on art production in Rome, see Huskinson (1982) 96–7.
 - 67 Whenever I use the term ‘early Christian’ I refer to the period of the third and fourth century, unless stated otherwise.

Some traces remain of Christian poetical and artistic initiatives before those that clearly refer to the apostles. A passage by Clement of Alexandria (140–220) discusses signet rings with ‘neutral’ signs that could be interpreted in a Christian way. One of the images he recommends is that of a fisherman, which would remind of the apostles.⁶⁸

Clement of Alexandria not only provides one of the first references to early Christian art, but also concludes his *Paedagogus* (written around 190) with a hymn to Christ in anapaests.⁶⁹ Methodius of Olympus († 311 app.) concluded his *Banquet* (260–290) with a hymn about Christ as the bridegroom of the Church. The chant is written in iambs.⁷⁰ Methodius’ choice for a poetic hymn at the end of his symposium-text is curious, but may have been influenced by the final part of the *Paedagogus* of Clement of Alexandria.⁷¹ Hymns were also written by heretical groups, already in the second century.⁷²

Apart from the hymns, an early Christian hexameter poem (*terminus ante quem*: 216) inscribed on the tomb of Aberkios of Hierapolis (fig. 1) is particularly interesting, since it mentions the name of Paul in line 12: Παῦλον ἐχὼν ἐπ’ ὅ[χω·] Πίστις π[άντη] δὲ προήγει.⁷³ It is unclear whether Παῦλον merely denotes the writings of Paul or the whole Bible.⁷⁴ Christian additions to the

68 *Paedagogus* 3,59,2. See Francis (2003a) and Engemann (1996) 299–300, also discussing other readings of the passage. The reading propagated by, among others, Francis and Engemann, is most convincing.

69 The hymn is called “Ὑμνος τοῦ σωτήρος Χριστοῦ τοῦ ἁγίου Κλήμεντος, but this title is not original. For an analysis of the metrical scheme, see Marrou and Harl (1960) 204–6. Cf. Sirinelli (1993) 436: “C’est peut-être la fin du *Pédagogue* de Clément d’Alexandrie qui nous offre le premier essai littéraire de poésie chrétienne.” For a short description of the poem, see Van den Hoek (1997). The hymn is missing in the oldest manuscript we have from the *Paedagogus*. Although it was not originally part of the *Paedagogus* (book three closes with a prayer which is clearly meant to finish the entire work), its content and style are clearly Clement’s, see May (1983) 258–9.

70 See Musurillo & Debidour (1963). For Methodius, see LACL s.v. Methodius von Olympus 502–3.

71 See e.g. Bracht (1997) 185 (note 42). Cf. May (1983) 259.

72 Examples are mentioned by Quasten (1950) 158, May (1983) 257 and Thraede (1961) 109. However, heretical hymns did not influence the literary poetic tradition, see Van der Nat (1963) 8.

73 E.g. Unger & Dillon (1992) 221–2 and Wischmeyer (1980), who remarks that the Aberkios inscription is the first complete Christian funeral epigram (p. 46). For a recent description of the epitaph, see Utro (2009) 323–4 (note 95). According to a *vita* (“alquanto fantasiosa”, ib.) from the fourth century, Aberkios was a bishop.

74 Wischmeyer (1980), from whom I have adopted the text, assumes that Παῦλον is a *pars pro toto* for the whole Bible (p. 41). Quasten (1950) 172 translates: “Having Paul as a companion, everywhere faith led the way” (without citing a Greek text).

Sibylline oracles (mostly from the second century) are another early sign of Christian poetry.⁷⁵

Whereas most of early Christian poetry was thus written in Greek, in contrast with the few Greek Christian poets of the fourth century,⁷⁶ only few Latin-speaking Christians wrote poetry that was recognisable as Christian before Juvenius. Apart from those of Commodianus, only the works of Optatian Porphyry and the anonymous *Laudes Domini* can be mentioned.⁷⁷ Lactantius wrote his *De ave phoenice* without direct references to Christianity: even if the poem was probably meant to be Christian, this kind of crypto-Christian poetry cannot be considered a clear marker of a Christian poetical tradition.⁷⁸

The third century thus witnessed the first developments of Christian art and poetry. Poets and craftsmen alike explored the boundaries within which they could operate. The focus on the apostles ensures that all visual material discussed is Christian, since there is no evidence for non-Christians depicting the apostles. Two poems of the poetic corpus are exceptional, since they can reasonably be doubted to have been written by a Christian: one is composed by Claudian—whose religious convictions are still discussed, even though there seems to be a tendency to consider him a Christian—the other by Palladas, generally considered a pagan.⁷⁹ In both cases, the context clearly reveals that the apostles are referred to in a different way compared to other writings, which makes the poems atypical within the corpus of texts that is investigated. They offer a rare insight in different (negative) possible representations of the apostles, of which unfortunately only very little is left, even if it seems reasonable to suppose that there were considerably more of them.⁸⁰

75 Moreschini & Norelli (2005) 220–1.

76 For a concise overview of what we know of Greek Christian poetry in the fourth century see Prudhomme (2006) 15–23.

77 See for Porphyry the instructive article by Levitan (1985); for the *Laudes Domini* see: Salzano, A. (2006). *Agli inizi della poesia cristiana latina. Autori anonimi dei secc. IV–V*. Salerno, Edisud Salerno.

78 The phoenix was a popular creature in early Christian thought, see Walla (1969). It appeared in Christian art from early times onwards. Most often it represented the Resurrection of Christ, see id. 116–8. Walla does not mention its place in the *Dominus legem dat* scene (see 2.2.2.3.1), for which see e.g. TIP 180 s.v. Fenice (Bisconti).

79 See 1.7 and 1.7.1.

80 Cf. e.g. Von Harnack (1922) about the apostle Peter in the eyes of enemies of the Church in antiquity.

Antiquity certainly was, in all its diversity, characterised by a common cultural heritage.⁸¹ Christians shared this heritage, which did not mean that the Christian world was a monolithic block in late antiquity, as it is not in our days. A 'dynamic interpretation' of this world is needed to avoid a biased approach, doing justice to the patchwork of views and opinions among Christians in late antiquity. Christians lived in different regions and were part of different ranks of society. Speaking of one Christian culture is therefore convenient, but also slightly misleading.⁸² In order to account for the diversity of the early Christian tradition, a wide range of poetry and art from Greco-Roman culture is included. Hopefully, the pitfall "to adhere to a narrow, almost "canonical", selection of works of Late Antique art" is thus avoided as much as possible.⁸³ Despite the differences between regions, material from the Eastern as well as the Western part of the Roman Empire is deliberately included in this investigation. Since this study is restricted to an analysis of Greek and Latin poetry, Christian poetry in other languages from the same period is not discussed (e.g. the hymns by Ephrem the Syrian).⁸⁴ As a result of the limited diversity in the provenance of early Christian art, the Eastern regions of the Roman Empire and North Africa are barely mentioned in this book.

The material objects containing images of the apostles can be divided roughly in four categories: (catacomb) paintings, sarcophagi, mosaics and *arti minori* (applied arts or small objects with figurative decoration like reliquaries or gold glasses).⁸⁵ There are relatively few objects left from the private realm.⁸⁶ Villas of the wealthy, for example that in Piazza Armerina, seem to have been rather embellished with classical mythological and non-figurative scenery than with purely Christian images, although there are some exceptions, mainly

81 Elsner (1998) 13.

82 See Petersen (2003) 158.

83 Brown (1979) 18. More in general Genette (2001), esp. 111–3.

84 Cf. Cameron (2006) 18, who points to works originally written in Greek and only preserved in Syrian: these are not included in the present research either.

85 The *arti minori* form a heterogeneous group of objects, as the definition of Testini (1969) 243–4 indicates: "Così stando le cose, per la necessità contingente di questa ricerca mi è parso conveniente ricorrere ancora alla vecchia definizione, meno impegnativa e più comoda, e in essa comprendere la grande massa di manufatti, quanto mai vari per forma, dimensione, materiale, tecnica, destinazione ed uso, che, rovinati dagli accidenti e portati dalla vicenda storica di luogo in luogo e di mano in mano, solo in numero esiguo e fortunosamente si sono conservati in collezioni pubbliche e private sparse in tutto il mondo."

86 In contrast with late antique art in general in which private objects are well represented, see Brown (1979) 22.

in Britain.⁸⁷ The influence of classical, traditional ideas was still strong among the elite.⁸⁸ Only one large scale free standing sculpture survives.⁸⁹ That there was more is indicated by the *Liber Pontificalis*, which mentions a gift from Constantine to the Lateran Church that consisted of silver statues of Christ and the twelve apostles and another group of statues representing Christ with four angels, to be placed upon a *fastigium*. Given the otherwise great loss of early Christian artefacts, it seems reasonable to trust the *Liber pontificalis* in this, even if this gift is without precedent or succession in the repertoire of Christian art that has remained.⁹⁰ The reminiscence of the statues of pagan deities probably was too strong. Illustrated *codices* are another case in point: some examples remain from the beginning of the fifth century, both of pagan (*Vergilius Vaticanus*) and Christian (*Quedlinburger Itala*) literature. The *codices* were luxury products, and were only affordable for a small group of people. Unfortunately, almost no information about examples from before the fifth century is available.⁹¹

To a large extent, the remaining material originally comes from a funerary context: this is self-evident in the case of catacomb paintings and sarcophagi, but in a way also holds true for reliquaries (carrying the remnants of saints)

87 See Bowes (2011), focusing on the evidence for Christian images, and id. (2008) about villas on the countryside in general. For the villas in Britain found in Lullingstone and Hinton St Mary: see Painter (1971). There is also the villa from Centcelles, of which some mosaics and paintings have been preserved. Twelve Biblical scenes were depicted, of which nine have been identified. Only one found its inspiration in the New Testament (the raising of Lazarus). Other villas in Spain have the usual pagan, traditional decoration, see Schlunk and Hauschild (1978) 27–8. See Duval (1993) 37–45 for villas in Aquitaine. According to Brandenburg (2004) 9, pagan images in late antiquity were no longer able to express ideas about the afterlife—hence their disappearance from sarcophagi—but mainly showed relationship with the past, which explains their presence in villas.

88 Cf. Brown (2012) about the social position of the clergy, who did not belong to the upper class of Roman society in the fourth century, e.g. pp. 31–51, 102 and 110–9 (about the differences between the Christian aristocrat Ambrose and the traditional aristocrat Symmachus).

89 See Hellemo (1989) 20.

90 See De Blaauw (1996) about the “monströse Frechheit des Kaisers” (p. 61) who offered statues of holy Biblical figures to the Church. Brenk (2011) 113 follows his argument. However, opinions differ about the exact nature of Constantine’s donation, see e.g. Engemann (1996) 310, who accepts the idea of donation of the *fastigium*, but not that of the statues. The Cleveland marbles (representing Jonah and the Good Shepherd) are the most famous small statues that remain from early Christian art. They were probably used in a private context, maybe as fountain statues, see Kitzinger (2002).

91 Zimmermann (1998).

and gold glasses, which were often used as decoration in the closing of the *loculi* in the catacombs. Unfortunately, almost nothing survives of early Christian church interiors (the Santa Costanza was originally built as a mausoleum).⁹² The only surviving images of the apostles from early churches are the apse mosaic in the Santa Pudenziana in Rome, the mosaics from the Sant'Aquilino chapel in Milan and the mosaics in the Battistero di San Giovanni in Fonte in the cathedral of Naples.⁹³

Most remaining objects of early Christian art come from Rome and its surroundings, next to notable patrimony from Gaul, Spain and the Balkans.⁹⁴ However, the influence of Rome as a cultural centre was clearly felt in these regions. Only little art is left from the Eastern part of the empire and virtually no images of the apostles, although the picture should be nuanced by taking into account the influence of craftsmen from Constantinople on the production of sarcophagi in the West.⁹⁵ This might be partly due to the period of iconoclasm in the Byzantine Empire (especially the period 730–787): a considerable number of early Christian artefacts might have been demolished in this period. It has been suggested that the Arab occupation has influenced the number of surviving early Christian sarcophagi (and other figurative art) in southern Spain and in Africa in a negative way.⁹⁶ In general, loss caused by reuse of material should also be taken into account.⁹⁷ Although the reluctance to depict Biblical persons seems to have always been greater in the Christian East than in the West, several texts testify to the existence of early Christian art

92 But see Humphries (1999) 72–105 for a survey of material from Northern Italy and Istria (not including images with Biblical scenes).

93 To these examples can be added the paintings in what presumably was a house church below Ss. Giovanni e Paolo and the former Ospedale di S. Angelo, see Brenk (2003) 82–105 and 121–8. There are no apostles depicted there, but at least one New Testament scene (the raising of Lazarus) was found in the latter place.

94 For early Christian art from the region of modern Germany see Domagalski (1996), cf. some examples in Korol (2014) and Shanzer (2010) 81–2. They do not mention representations of the apostles that diverge from those that are known from Rome. For images of Peter and Paul from Hungary (not significantly diverging from those known from elsewhere) see e.g. Hudák (2009). Catacombs in North-Africa barely contain images and are often badly preserved, see Leynaud (1922).

95 For Eastern art see Beckwith (1968). Cf. Lazaridou (2011). For influence from Constantinople on sarcophagi from the West (mainly Gaul and Ravenna) see e.g. Brandenburg (2004) 19–20.

96 Schlunk & Hauschild (1978) 19.

97 Cf. e.g. Cutler (1997) 983.

in Eastern regions. The house church in Dura Europos definitively proves that not all Christians in the Eastern part of the empire had an aversion of images.⁹⁸

Some works of art—like the famous mosaics of the Santa Costanza in Rome, but also several sarcophagi—pose problems since they have been heavily restored. They are included in the present research, but considered with prudence. Lost material is only considered in the margins of this work, even if (near) contemporary descriptions exist, since these descriptions are often difficult to assess.⁹⁹

Most poetry that remains comes from few different regions only. Many authors worked in Italy or Spain. Gregory, Amphilochius and Hilary wrote their poems in the East (Hilary probably wrote his hymns during his exile), presumably in Cappadocia. Commodianus is an exception (with Palladas), although it is not certain that he wrote in Africa, as is most often assumed. The amount of Greek poetry is significantly smaller than that from the Latin West.¹⁰⁰

If the region of birth of the poets is taken into consideration, the pattern is more varied: Ambrosius was born in Germania, Hilary and Paulinus were born in Gaul. However, it is doubtful whether this region still played a role when the poets wrote their oeuvre.¹⁰¹ The poets often moved to other provinces in an early stage of their career. Hilary is an exception, but his work does not provide reasons to consider it different from the poems of other authors. Most Latin poets show a preoccupation with Rome, which can be explained from both the important position of the city from a historical and religious perspective and the cultural tradition that the poets tried to follow, in which the city held a central position.¹⁰² Only Proba and Damasus actually wrote in the city. Other poets are known to have visited Rome (Ambrosius, Prudentius, Paulinus, also Claudian).

In sum, the main regions from which Western poetry and art survive until the present day roughly overlap: Italy (with Rome and Milan as centres of cultural activity), Gaul and Spain.

98 E.g. homily 1,4 (about Biblical scenes depicted on clothes) and 11 (about paintings in a sanctuary for Euphemia) by Asterius of Amasea (*fl.* around 400), text: Datema (1970). See also De Blaauw (2008).

99 Noticed already by Wilpert (1903a) 173–81.

100 See for a brief overview of Greek early Christian poetry Hammerstaedt (1997) 306–8, also Cameron (2006) and Cameron (2004). Cf. note 76.

101 A counterexample is Ambrose's *Ordo urbium nobilium*, for which see e.g. Beck (1969) 56–76.

102 See e.g. Dijkstra (2012) and Zarini (2010); also Roberts (2001).

4 Methodology

The model of the circuit of culture is used to address some key issues of the study of early Christian art and poetry. The discussion of these aspects comprises several basic assumptions with which I have addressed my data (4.1). Subsequently, the relationship between word and image is discussed (4.2). Finally, the approach of objects of poetic texts and art is explained (4.2.2.3–5).

4.1 *The Circuit of Culture*

As a response to the ‘cultural turn’, Du Gay, Hall, Janes, Mackay and Negus presented the so-called circuit of culture as a practical means of doing cultural studies.¹⁰³ They introduced the model only briefly: it was explained primarily by providing examples of its use in the study of (modern) cultural artefacts. The circuit can easily be transposed to a context that is different in time, as is the case in the present study. In this circuit, the factors that influence the role of a cultural artefact in society are described and presented in close relationship to each other. The model of the circuit of culture presents the way in which a cultural object or text is given meaning by five main aspects: production, identity, representation, regulation and consumption.¹⁰⁴

One of the main assets of the circuit of culture is that it shows the interconnections (or articulations)¹⁰⁵ between the different factors of which it consists. Whereas the focus in this study is on representation, the other factors are of decisive influence, since they are inextricably linked to it. Especially the factors production and consumption include two aspects with far-reaching consequences for the study of early Christian art in particular and will therefore be discussed in more detail: the relationship between commissioners and producers of objects of art and the visibility of early Christian artefacts with figurative decoration in particular.

4.1.1 Representation

The representation of the apostles in early Christian art and poetry is the central theme of this study. Representation denotes the form in which a cultural artefact is moulded and the way in which it is given meaning. Meaning is of course dependent of various aspects: in the present study meaning given

103 Du Gay, Hall et al. (1997). For some background on the development of the model see Taylor, Demont-Heinrich et al. (2002) 608–9.

104 Du Gay, Hall et al. (1997) 1–4.

105 This term is used in Du Gay, Hall et al. (1997) 3.

through language and images is central. The way in which a matter or concept is described or depicted reveals something of its relevance and is of influence on the way it is received (or consumed). This notion can be applied to all kinds of cultural artefacts.

In the present case of the representation of the apostles, both texts and images refer to an existing concept expressed for the main part in the Bible. This could be called the mimetic part (part of the reflective approach) of the representation of the apostles:¹⁰⁶ without necessarily implying that meaning lies in the depiction or description proper, it is embedded in it, as the result of a fixed and generally acknowledged tradition. The fact that the apostles were followers of Christ could not be altered, because it was described in texts that were generally considered authoritative.

The meaning of the poetic and visual representations of stories that are already known from other sources is primarily determined by the way in which the existing story is translated into a new medium or another artefact by its producer(s) and how this 'translation' is received by its audience (the intentional and constructionist approach of representation).¹⁰⁷ The intended meaning that is attributed to a representation based on existing ideas is primarily established by the degree to which elements of the original story are kept or omitted (e.g. the absence of the maid in virtually all scenes of the denial of Peter) and the degree to which new elements are added (e.g. Juvenecus' addition of flattering epithets to Peter). Moreover, existing elements can be kept, but altered on purpose (i.e. apart from alterations that are the result from a change in medium, e.g. from text to image): the way in which the conflict between Peter and Paul in Antioch is described by Gregory of Nazianzus (among others) is a good example. The reception of early Christian art and literature depended for a large part on the level of education of its audience: someone not knowing Vergil was unlikely ever to enjoy Proba's cento, and without pre-existing images of ancient philosophers the way in which the outer appearance of the apostles was depicted could have been offending rather than appealing to Christians (since the Bible clearly states that many of them were fishermen and they are not depicted likewise).

Representation cannot be studied on its own. Several factors are of influence in the process of representation and, at the same time, representation exerts influence on other processes. Nevertheless, Stuart Hall has discussed represen-

¹⁰⁶ See for these terms Hall (2002) 24.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Hall (2002) 25–6. The role of producers and consumers is elaborated upon in 4.1.2 and 4.1.4 below.

tation as a key-element in the circuit of culture.¹⁰⁸ Equally, the focus of this book is on representation in two media: image and (poetical) text. In this way, representation seems almost the summary of the other factors. The intentions with which meaning is attributed are actually part of the process of production, whereas the way a cultural product is received is part of its consumption.

Meaning is essential to the study of any object, but it is difficult to say where the process of attribution of meaning starts.¹⁰⁹ Whereas cultural factors are of influence on production, the result of the production process—the actual poem or object of art—influences the process of attribution of meaning of other poems and artefacts. The success of a particular image, for example, in most cases incites an increasing production of new ones (copies) or a differentiation of genres/categories of art in which the image is used: the *Dominus legem dat* (traditionally *traditio legis*) is assumed to have originally been depicted in the apse of a church, but it was soon found on gold glasses and sarcophagi as well.

4.1.2 Production

Naturally, the production of objects referring to the apostles (in this case poems and images) is at the start of the creation of representation. Here, we encounter many problems due to a lack of sources providing information about either the production process or the identity of the producers of early Christian art and poetry.¹¹⁰ Knowledge of the identity of the producers would possibly give some idea of their intentions as well as of the aims of (partly) equal to those who were intended to be addressed by the makers of the cultural artefacts.

The identity of most of the poets is clear and the life of most of the poets is relatively well documented (main exceptions are the early poets Commodianus, Juvenius and Proba), although sometimes almost exclusively in the oeuvre of the poets themselves (notably in the case of Prudentius). Writing poetry can safely be said to have been an individual activity in which only few others were

108 Hall (2002) 1. A second edition of Hall's book recently appeared (with Jessica Evans and Sean Nixon as co-editors), but the discussion of the circuit remained unchanged (although the factor representation is not accentuated anymore in the diagram explaining the circuit, see Hall, Evans et al. (2013) xviii). Cf. Curtin & Gaither (2007) for an example of an applied circuit of culture.

109 Cf. Hall (2002) 3–4.

110 Eusebius refers to pagan tradition with regards to paintings of Peter and Paul (*h.e.* 7,18,4). There is no evidence for non-Christians having produced art recognisable as Christian.

involved as advisors during the writing process. Those people were friends and relatives, rather than professional publishers.

Eleven (identifiable) writers are examined in this study, of which ten are men and seven had a position within the Church. Four poets were laypersons: Proba, not in the least because of the fact that she was a woman, Prudentius, Claudian and Palladas, the latter two being Christians in name or not Christian at all. About Commodianus we know very little, but the didactic nature of his poetry suggests that he had an ecclesiastical function. The other poets were all bishops, except for Commodianus (possible, but unknown ecclesiastical function) and presbyter Juvenius.

The incentive to write poetry originally seems to have been rather personal: Juvenius expresses the hope that his work will save him from the eternal fire (*prooemium* 22) and Proba mentions her husband and Christian brothers at the end of her poem, suggesting that she expected them to read her work (*Cento Probae* 692–4). Social-political circumstances also played a role. It can hardly be a coincidence that a Christian poetical tradition actually started with the reign of Constantine.¹¹¹

Later poetry is more clearly directed to the outside world, e.g. Damasus' epigrams, shown in Roman churches, and Ambrose's hymns, which were meant to sing in church. Probably because of the metre—which made it easier to remember the content of a text—many bishops regarded poetry as an effective means of communication, e.g. Amphilochius of Iconium, Gregory of Nazianzus and Paulinus of Nola (who acted already as leader of the Nolan community even before he became the Nolan bishop).¹¹²

The analysis of the production of early Christian art seems more problematic than that of poetry. Our lack of knowledge about the production process hampers the understanding of the way in which art functioned in late antique society. Sarcophagi are the most numerous category of early Christian art and have survived in relatively large numbers (compared to other materials). They provide us with many apostle scenes. The production of sarcophagi is therefore discussed first and most extensively.

The difference in quality among Christian sarcophagi is remarkable. It has often been tried to explain this difference as a difference in style, depending on the workshop or region where sarcophagi were produced. The style of a workshop was not only determined by aesthetic preferences, but also depended on the quality of the craftsmen employed.

111 This notion was taken very seriously by Kirsch (1989) in particular.

112 Cf. also Augustine's psalm against the Donatists (in which the apostles are not mentioned), for which see e.g. Hunink (2011).

This line of reasoning has been challenged by a stimulating article of the German scholar Klaus Eichner—based on his dissertation about Constantinian sarcophagi from Rome. He stated that the technical aspect of the production of sarcophagi had unduly been neglected and that the assumption that we now have sarcophagi in a final state is a false one.¹¹³ Eichner had a much more economical view on sarcophagus production than was hitherto usual. He claimed that the production process of sarcophagi could be deduced from the corpus of remaining examples, since they reflected different stages of that process. All sarcophagi were produced in one big “Sarkophagfabrik” in Rome and the production process was organised in a way comparable to modern production line work:

Alle Bearbeitungsspuren weisen vielmehr auf eine Arbeitsorganisation hin, wie wir sie im modernen Industriebetrieb antreffen, vergleichbar etwa mit der Fließbandarbeit in der Autoindustrie. Facharbeiter—sprich Handwerker—und ungelernte Arbeiter—sprich Sklaven—bestimmen das Bild eines nach ökonomischen Gesichtspunkten organisierten, rationell und konsequent arbeitsteilig produzierenden Großbetriebes.¹¹⁴

Eichner reconstructed the production process in ten phases.¹¹⁵ The production of a sarcophagus could be brought to a hold at any phase in order to sell it (for a lower price than when it was finished). Specialists and unskilled labourers both contributed to the production; for instance, specialists marked the contours of the figurative elements on the sarcophagus and unskilled labourers drilled the stone. Three levels of decoration were distinguished.¹¹⁶ The drill was used as much as possible and enabled a cheap and efficient production.¹¹⁷

The production process might account for small differences in the execution of the same scene: since specialists were supposed to mark the outlines of a scene, other craftsmen might have had a certain license to fill in the details within the limits imposed by the general scheme. Differences between

113 Eichner (1981), pp. 85–9 for a sketch of the development of research on the topic.

114 Eichner (1981) 91.

115 Eichner (1981) 93–104, summary on 103–4: Eichner distinguishes nine phases there, but adds another one on p. 111: the painting of the sarcophagus. Koch (2000) 72–5 has roughly the same process in seven steps (including the painting).

116 Eichner (1981) 94 (note 59) in particular: “I. Raumschicht = Flachrelief” (first layer from the outside), “II. Hauptreliefschicht = Hochrelief” and “III. Hintergrundschicht = Relief der Hintergrundfiguren”.

117 Eichner (1981) 107–9. P. 109: “Die Massenproduktion der Sarkophage des 3. und besonders des 4. Jahrhunderts ist ohne den Bohrer nicht zu denken.”

sarcophagi form an important aspect of the discussion about production on stock or on demand. The relatively small number of different scenes depicted on sarcophagi—whereas the main source of inspiration alone, the Bible, offers a potentially endless number of stories that could have easily been visualised—suggests that many sarcophagi were delivered from stock with little choice left to the customer to choose his own decoration programme.¹¹⁸ The use of catalogues of images from which customers could pick what decoration they preferred could explain the relative lack of originality in imagery on sarcophagi. However, some sarcophagi showing a highly original programme suggest that production on demand was indeed possible.¹¹⁹ Maybe the differences in details are also to be explained by the demand of customers (if the deceased are depicted on the sarcophagi, this influence is unquestioned). To assume a mixture of both forms of production (from stock and on demand) seems most reasonable.¹²⁰ Apart from the carving, the sarcophagi were probably often painted, although almost no traces of painting on early Christian sarcophagi survive. However, painted elements may have contained important information for the interpretation of the scenes depicted. For instance, the apostles might have been more often indicated individually by name (or even through an attribute) than we are able to observe.¹²¹

Against Eichner's hypothesis of one Roman sarcophagus factory, others have opposed the idea of a group of collaborating workshops in Rome:¹²² the small differences in execution of the same scene on different sarcophagi are used

118 Cf. Ward Perkins (1978) 651. Russell (2011) is opposed to the idea of production from stock, although he allows it for child sarcophagi (p. 141). The imagery on these child sarcophagi was similar to that on adult sarcophagi; see Ossewaarde (2012), e.g. 383.

119 Clearly only people from the highest circles could afford buying a sarcophagus, even more so if it was adapted to specific wishes, cf. e.g. Dresken-Weiland (2004). More original programmes also oppose the idea that technical abilities of craftsmen determined (and restricted) early Christian imagery, which was put forward among others by Provoost (2011a) 170.

120 Cf. Koch (2000) 83–4; pp. 107–22 about portraits, less common on Christian than on pagan sarcophagi.

121 The depiction of attributes was suggested by Koch (2000) 81.

122 See Koch (2000) 79–81 (proposing the idea of a “Bazar Industrie”, comparing the production of Roman sarcophagi to that of Turkish wooden interiors) and Russell (2011) 129–30. The latter also attributes a greater role to the quarries in the production process. Some basic treatments took place there, maybe even the execution of specific wishes from the client, see id. 131–7. Cf. Ward Perkins (1978) 648: treatment at the quarry reduced the costs of transport.

to substantiate this suggestion, which seems indeed more likely than that of Eichner, if only because no archaeological evidence for his large sarcophagus factory has been found so far.¹²³ Due to the great amount of finds from those regions, it is generally assumed that local workshops existed in Gaul (Arles and surroundings) and Aquitaine, and in Constantinople and Ravenna from the end of the fourth century onwards. The sarcophagi from Gaul were strongly influenced by Roman sarcophagi (if not produced for the main part in Rome), whereas Constantinople developed a style of its own that seems to have influenced craftsmen in Ravenna (or maybe Constantinopolitan craftsmen were employed in that city).¹²⁴

Eichner himself already briefly mentioned one of the main objections against his theory: why did all customers order an unfinished sarcophagus (not a single completely finished sarcophagus survives in Eichner's view)? Even outstanding examples such as the Junius Bassus sarcophagus were unfinished.¹²⁵ Eichner proposes two solutions: firstly, some sarcophagi were nearly finished and it was assumed by the workshops that the differences with an entirely completed example were hardly visible. A reciprocal development took place at the end of the third and in the fourth century: people demanded more sarcophagi and therefore the production process had to be quickened to meet the demand.¹²⁶ The process was rationalised and simplified (that is sarcophagi were delivered unfinished) and therefore the sarcophagi became cheaper, which stimulated the demand.

However, this solution meets several problems: the sarcophagus production was much higher in the period before (and almost contemporaneous with the period that) Christian art came into being than from the Constantinian period onwards, when most preserved Christian sarcophagi were produced.¹²⁷

¹²³ Following Koch (2000) 79–80.

¹²⁴ See especially Koch (2000) 216–8 and his discussion of early Christian sarcophagi per region on pp. 219–590. Cf. for the French sarcophagi Immerzeel (1994) and Caillet (1993) 128–30. For Spain, see Ripoll López (1993) and Schlunk and Hauschild (1978) 21. Cazes (1993) 70 suggests activity of wandering craftsmen or workshops.

¹²⁵ See Rep 1 680: all sarcophagi mentioned are indicated with the numbers from the *Repertoria der christlich-antiken Sarkophage*. Catacomb paintings are referred to with a F-number, found in Provoost (2011abc). Material that is not in these catalogues is indicated with another convenient designation.

¹²⁶ Dresken-Weiland (2003) 15 also suggests—in line with Eichner's reasoning—that a demand too high for the capacity of the workshop(s) might have been a reason for the incompleteness of the sarcophagi.

¹²⁷ Numbers in Koch (2000) 216. Koch estimates that only 2–5% of the sarcophagi remains; Russell (2011) 127 considers this number to be too low (assuming 20%).

Moreover, it has been argued that the costs for material and transport were so high as to reduce the costs of decoration to a relatively low percentage of the total costs.¹²⁸ Due to a lack of sources on the actual costs of a sarcophagus, this is difficult to confirm.

Eichner's second solution is that content was more important than form for Christians, and that for this reason they accepted unfinished sarcophagi as end products. Other scholars have agreed on this conclusion.¹²⁹ Moreover, the painting might have obscured technical deficiencies.¹³⁰ Apart from economical and practical concerns in the production process, the sarcophagi had to be bought by people who were willing to accept an unfinished product. The production of sarcophagi diminished in the third century and was then stimulated again, maybe due to the more stable political situation of the Roman Empire or by the rise of the Christian religion.¹³¹ The momentary lack of capacity that resulted from the increasing demand for sarcophagi might have been the original reason for the 'unfinished' state of early Christian sarcophagi. However, this unfinished state might have become a stylistic preference of the customers afterwards, when the capacity of workshops had been brought to the necessary level. The finished state of a sarcophagus cannot be distinguished without using concepts of style. Since style is a subjective concept that is differing throughout history, it seems most fruitful to accept the material as it is: people apparently were satisfied with sarcophagi that we are inclined to consider unfinished.

Another type of art that was frequently used by Christians in late antiquity was that of paintings. Only examples from the catacombs survive in considerable numbers. As is the case with the sarcophagus industry, we have only little information about the production process, and no literary sources.¹³² The catacombs were first of all burying places for the poor (buried in *loculi*), but the more well-to-do could afford a *cubiculum*, which could be decorated with

128 Dresken-Weiland (2003) 15, but cf. Duval (1993) 30 stating the opposite (for sarcophagi from marble from the Pyrenees in particular). See Dresken-Weiland (2003) 14; 76–80 about the sources (few and hardly contemporary) for estimations of the costs of production.

129 Dresken-Weiland (2003) 15. No differences have been detected in imagery between sarcophagi in different stadia of completeness, see Eichner (1981) 110.

130 Eichner (1981) 109–11.

131 In any case, the general transition of cremation to inhumation did not have a causal relationship to the rise of Christianity, see Bodel (2008) 181–9.

132 Unless indicated otherwise, information about the catacombs in this section comes from Zimmermann (2002). Technical aspects of the production of paintings in the catacombs are found in Bordignon (2000). See also Jonckheere (2006).

paintings, probably produced by the *fossore*s who supervised the catacombs. Even a decorated grave was easier to afford than a sarcophagus. Not only the marble of which sarcophagi were made, but also the professional skills needed to decorate a sarcophagus made burial in sarcophagi more expensive.¹³³ Although the decoration in the catacombs was probably chosen by the owners of the graves, the presence of Church employees (the *fossore*s) might have impeded the production of images that were not in accordance with orthodoxy.¹³⁴ However, the position of the *fossore*s is disputed (see 4.1.2). The catacombs offer the first examples of Christian figurative art (after the paintings from Dura Europos), but lost their role of pioneer in the fourth century, when innovation in imagery came from the producers of sarcophagi and monumental art.¹³⁵

Mosaics were produced on demand by rich individuals (e.g. in the Santa Costanza) or institutions (the Church and the court). As is the case with all Christian art, the mosaics were probably produced by existing workshops that until the fourth century produced traditional mosaics but gradually started to include the new Christian imagery in their repertoire in order to meet the demands of a new era.

Other objects are conveniently collected under the term *arti minori*. They include gold glasses, statuettes, lamps and other objects used in daily life and reliquaries. All these objects could be decorated with figurative images, but narrative scenes with apostles mainly appear on reliquaries.¹³⁶ Gold glasses often show the apostles (almost exclusively Peter and Paul), almost exclusively

133 Zimmermann (2002) 271.

134 Cf. Bordignon (2000) 117.

135 It is rather unlikely that the decoration of the mausoleum of Clodius Hermes (first half of the third century) contains New Testament scenes, as is sometimes suggested, see e.g. Korol (2011) 1633 (note 101) and Jonckheere (2006) 97 (note 4).

136 See especially Testini (1969) for the apostles Peter and Paul in the *arti minori*. For early Christian reliquaries see the catalogue by Buschhausen (1971), with the comments by Kalinowski (2011) 2; 131 (note 686) and Noga-Banai (2008) 156–8 and 163 (her catalogue numbers 3, 4, 6 and 16, which were not mentioned by Buschhausen or Kalinowski). Béjaoui (1984) discusses several examples of African pottery bearing images of Peter and Paul: apparently, African pottery in general shows the two apostles mostly on both sides of a cross, see id. 45. She compares the rectangular plates of pottery to ivory diptychs and gold glasses and concludes (p. 62): “La céramique serait ainsi l'équivalent à bon marché de ces derniers types d'objets.” Bejaoui's *Les thèmes bibliques sur la sigillée africaine* (Tunis, 1997), referred to by Van den Hoek (2006) 198 (note 5), was not accessible to me. Van den Hoek herself discusses a piece with Peter and Paul surrounding a consul.

busts and other types of portraits.¹³⁷ Although this can partly be explained by the small surface on which the image had to be applied, several examples remain that show Biblical scenes, mainly miracles performed by Christ.¹³⁸ The gold glasses were almost exclusively produced in Rome.¹³⁹ Although several scholars have tried to distinguish between different workshops responsible for the corpus of gold glasses, Hans-Jörg Nüsse has suggested that the differences in style and composition are rather due to different production series. Only the *Nuppengläser* (small versions of gold glasses) form a group of glasses distinguishable from others, but even they might have been made in the same workshops where the standard gold glasses were produced.¹⁴⁰

Little is known about the circumstances of production of the other *arti minori*. *Scrinia*—the word was originally used to refer to bookcases, but in a broader sense now refers to all types of boxes—and reliquaries were made of different materials: wood, stone, silver, gold and ivory.¹⁴¹ Reliquaries seem to have often been donated to the Church: made of expensive materials (silver, ivory, sometimes gold) they were offered by rich individuals or families.¹⁴² More simple stone reliquaries, mostly used in the East, were maybe locally produced in serial production, similarly to objects for pilgrims, like *ampullae*.¹⁴³ The examples from the *arti minori* discussed in this book have figurative scenes; this implies that they were probably all produced on demand. Unfortunately, the exact circumstances of production remain obscure.

Poets necessarily belonged to a small group of well educated people. Illiteracy was wide-spread in antiquity.¹⁴⁴ Writing poetry in classical metres was especially demanding. Only the elite of the literate class was therefore

137 See Grig (2004) 216 and 219 for numbers of apostolic representation on gold glasses and *passim* for a discussion of them. Morey 78 is a remarkable piece showing apostles in another way than in portrait: the *Dominus legem dat* scene is depicted, see Nüsse (2008) 238.

138 Catalogue: Morey (1959).

139 See Nüsse (2008) on the production of gold glasses and their provenance from Rome (a overwhelming majority) and some production in Cologne. However, most gold glasses found there were imported: Nüsse (2008).

140 Nüsse (2008) 253.

141 See Buschhausen (1971) 9–17 about *scrinia* and reliquaries, and his subsequent catalogue of remaining examples. For reliquaries see now Kalinowski (2011), pp. 73–95 about the materials from which reliquaries were made.

142 Kalinowski (2011) 25–6.

143 Id. 95–6.

144 Harris (1989).

able to write verses—and appreciate all literary aspects of the poems. There seems to have been a difference between the production of poetry and visual art in this respect. Objects of visual art were created by craftsmen who were themselves part of an illiterate class: they did not always fully understand the imagery they worked out.¹⁴⁵ But those who commissioned the production of decorated objects can be assumed to have belonged to the same group of people for which most poetry was written—although these commissioners are often unknown.¹⁴⁶

4.1.3 Regulation

Obviously, leading groups of late antique society had an interest in regulating the production of art and poetry, since the Christian imagery of both potentially influenced views on social and theological matters. The court, the Roman senate (since Rome was the main centre of production of early Christian art and poetry alike) and the Church wanted to prevent any damage to their position or any other kind of social turmoil. Since the representation of the apostles is first of all a religious expression, the Church had more interest in the regulation of Christian art and poetry than the other two factions.¹⁴⁷ Evidently, not all Christians were united under the authority of one Christian Church: however, since most art was produced in Rome and the Roman episcopate was well organised, necessary conditions for a possible influence of the Roman clergy were available.

Regulation would be most efficient and most effective at the stage of the production process. In contrast with their outreach, the supply of art and poetry was limited (more limited than that of prose literature). A restricted

145 Eichner (1981) 108; 111–2 (mentioning slaves and “ungelernte Arbeiter”) and Engemann (1997) 23. Likewise, the visitors of churches and catacombs who saw the images were not always able to interpret them and certainly not always in the way the commissioners of art had in mind, *id.* 24.

146 The process of creation of art and poetry was described in similar terms, see Guipponi-Gineste (2009) 34 (note 8). Cf. Roberts (1989) 66–121, p. 65 about the poetry of late antiquity: “The poetic text was understood in visual terms (...)”.

147 Eichner (1981) 92 assumed that sarcophagi were produced under supervision of the (Constantinian) court for practical reasons, following from his hypothesis of a “Sarkophagfabrik”: “Aus all diesen Überlegungen ergibt sich fast zwingend, daß es sich bei diesem gewinnbringenden Großbetrieb schwerlich um ein privates Unternehmen handeln kann. Eher ist dabei an einen staatlichen Betrieb zu denken, zumal die Marmorbrüche des Reiches schon seit Tiberius dem Kaiser direkt unterstehen. Es ist nicht damit zu rechnen, daß der Kaiser die einträgliche Sarkophagproduktion an den römischen Bischof abtritt.”

number of workshops produced most of the art available. Relatively few poets flourished in early Christian culture. This makes it more likely that it was possible to at least partially control the production of art and poetry.¹⁴⁸

Sarcophagi are the most interesting case in point, since they were produced for individual members of the Christian community and in large quantities. However, it is difficult to reveal how the choice for a specific imagery was made. Probably, the workshops tailored the decoration to the market, estimating what would appeal to the average customer.¹⁴⁹ Those who commissioned specific decoration of artefacts tried to shape the way in which they were perceived by posterity, e.g. by ordering a sarcophagus and maybe even by the programme of decoration.¹⁵⁰ There does not seem to have been any official control on the production of sarcophagi, or at least no references implying such censorship survive in the otherwise abundant literature that remains from late antiquity—a large part of which was written by bishops who probably would have been involved in this activity (if only in the appointment of those who were responsible for the supervision). Of course, any activity driven by economical motives that turned out to oppose orthodoxy or imperial rule or to disrupt social order was soon to be suppressed by the clergy, the court or the aristocracy. However, no examples have been documented.¹⁵¹

148 For an extreme view on the extent of control over the production of art in the Roman period, see Berczelly (2001), who assumes that artistic creativity re-appeared in early Christian culture (p. 190): “Otherwise it would be hard to explain the tremendous creative forces released in the first Christian centuries.” These forces rather seem to be explained by the rise of a new religion than by control via Church or state (after all, the latter continued to be influential in early Christian times).

149 Cf. Kirschbaum (1965) 743: “Il caso normale è questo: un determinato contenuto esiste prima nell’ambiente ideologico di un determinato tempo e di una determinata cultura, e solamente in un secondo tempo si concretizza e prende forma nella letteratura o nel monumento.”

150 Cf. Elsner (1998) 14: “Art represents the world not as it was, but as those who paid for or produced it wished the world to be.” The imagery chosen for the embellishment of a sarcophagus stimulates the viewer to think about the deceased in a specific way. Regulation of art is therefore a way to reconstruct the past, a notion elaborated upon by Assmann (2005) 40–2.

151 The position of the Church towards images in general is a separate discussion, which I do not address here since the acceptance of figural imagery is a *sine qua non* for my corpus. Although figurative Christian art was ubiquitous in the fourth century, some clergy remained opposed to it, among whom Epiphanius of Salamis is one of the most famous examples. Murray (1977) is still a good starting point for further investigation of this subject.

The invisibility of a considerable number of sarcophagi (see 4.1.4) made the decoration of these coffins a highly private matter on which control was both difficult and unnecessary. The same reasoning can be followed in the case of luxury products produced in small quantities. The Church might have been involved in the production of gold glasses (Morey 106, with a portrait of Damasus, supports this idea), but too little is known of the production process to make this more than a reasonable hypothesis. Gold glasses are often said to have functioned as souvenirs, but Grig has pointed to the fact that most of them were actually found in Rome.¹⁵² They might have functioned as objects to put on display.¹⁵³ The Church had control over the catacombs to a certain extent, but regulation was probably not applied to private *cubicula*, where most paintings are found.¹⁵⁴ Tombs were sold by the *fossore*s, who probably did not have an important function in the ecclesiastical hierarchy or no function at all: they worked rather independently.¹⁵⁵ It is unlikely that they were censors of images.

Compared to the writing of poetry, the circumstances of production of art were different: art was produced in workshops incomparable to the one-man business of poets. Although poets needed copyists to distribute their poems, these copyists most probably did not intentionally alter the text, whereas the remaining variety in details in early Christian art raises the suspicion that craftsmen had restricted freedom in their work.

In art, a significant deviance from official ecclesiastical doctrine was difficult to achieve. Most art was ordered by the clergy or meant to be used in places under strict control by the Church. Liturgical objects, reliquaries and gold glasses were produced on (more or less) large scale and probably by order of the clergy. Several bishops are known to have been involved in church

¹⁵² See Grig (2004) 230, *contra* Pietri (1976) 1540 (note 8) among others.

¹⁵³ Deckers (1996) 165: "(...) die Goldgläser, als häusliches Prunkgeschirr aufgestellt oder bei Gelagen herumgereicht (...)."

¹⁵⁴ Cf. e.g. Bodel (2008) 202–6 and Zimmermann (2002) 34 and 156. Bordignon (2000) 117 suggests influence by the Church, but does not elaborate on it. No catacomb paintings can be linked to Damasus' involvement in the catacombs, see Zimmermann (2002) 36.

¹⁵⁵ See Guyon (1974) 551–80 about the *fossore*s. The remaining evidence regarding the *fossore*s' exact position is scarce, but cf. id. 576: "(...) peut-être (faut-il ajouter sans doute?) certains *fossore*s étaient-ils clercs, et d'autres non? Il est difficile de l'affirmer, mais il serait vain, en revanche, d'essayer de leur donner dans la hiérarchie ecclésiastique de la Rome des IV^e et V^e siècles ce qu'ils n'ont vraisemblablement jamais eu: une place unique, déterminée et fixe." Cf. Rebillard (2003) 51–71, who refuses the idea of any involvement from the part of the Church in the construction of the catacombs, *pace* Pietri (1976), e.g. 129–33.

building and decoration, e.g. Ambrose and Paulinus of Nola.¹⁵⁶ Rather than assuming an active role of the Church in the choice of imagery in art, one should consider it to have made use of existing traditions and ideas among Christians, which had their roots in oral tradition and a sincere faith in the Biblical message.¹⁵⁷ Local clergy did not have clear missives of a centralised Church about art. Only the emperor could openly disturb the general consensus in the Church on the use of figurative images: the famous example of Constantine and his donation of statues of Christ and the twelve apostles to the Lateran basilica has already been mentioned (see section 3 above). This is an act without equivalent in the early Christian period and was probably not appreciated as much as Constantine might have expected.

The poetry that remains was almost exclusively produced by poets who were part of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. While there is no reason to assume that they were in any way censored by the Church, there is no reason to assume that they even thought of consciously producing poems that were deviant from generally accepted (i.e. Nicean) orthodoxy either.¹⁵⁸ They were of course well aware of political circumstances, as Juvenecus and Prudentius show by praising the emperor in their work. The poets adapted their work to the limits imposed by culture and tradition. The two instances of poems mocking the apostles (written by Claudianus and Palladas, see 1.7 and 1.7.1) show that poets sometimes transgressed their self-imposed boundaries.

4.1.4 Consumption

A discussion of the consumption of art touches on one of the most debated aspects of early Christian art: its visibility. Many studies have been devoted to the meaning and purpose of decoration in early Christian art, but only recently the awareness of its (partial) invisibility has won ground. Studies that suggest

156 Cf. Brenk (2005) 150: bishops were in charge of the decoration of churches, but they delegated this task to the “artists”. Brenk suggests that the license of the artists was primarily in the composition of scenes, depicting a story chosen by the clergy. According to Pillinger (1980) 18 church decorations were the responsibility of presbyters.

157 Cf. Mathews (1995) 5—who points to the fact that images often have been seen as the result instead of the moving force of politics—and Brenk (2005) 150: “The Church just wanted to represent the history of salvation but left it to the patrons and to the artists to decide how this ought to be done.”

158 Some Christian authors show surprising ideas that are not in accordance with official Christian doctrine, but in most cases they seem to do so out of ignorance, not out of malignity or insubordination. The remarkable project of Proba was probably heavily criticised by Jerome (although he does not mention her by name), but personal preferences (as well as patriarchal ideas) can have been at stake here, see 1.3.

propagandistic aims by the producers of art implicitly assume that people in late antiquity could see what was depicted.¹⁵⁹ It is important to distinguish between three factors in the discussion of visibility of a work of art: accessibility, visibility and readability. In other words: who had access to it, who could see it (without necessarily being able to interpret it) and who was able to give meaning to what was visible? The first two factors mainly concern physical aspects of visibility. Readability depends to a large degree on the level of education of the viewer.

The case of sarcophagi is particularly confusing. Sarcophagi in the catacombs are thought to have been placed in spots where they were relatively well visible. But recently, Jutta Dresken Weiland has emphasised that a large part of early Christian sarcophagi in churches and catacombs—also those that were lavishly decorated—were buried underneath the floor: the sarcophagi were then only accessible and visible during the funeral and mainly functioned as a message for the deceased (and for God).¹⁶⁰ This was also the main function of pagan sarcophagi.¹⁶¹ However, sarcophagi do not seem to have had any function during the funeral. Practical matters (especially the weight of the sarcophagus) impeded this. After his death, the deceased was first laid in state at home.¹⁶² Three days later, the corpse was carried to the church in a procession: the body lay in a wooden coffin or on a bier.¹⁶³ After the service, the corpse

159 E.g. the study by Huskinson (1982).

160 Dresken-Weiland (2003) 98–198, pp. 185–98 in particular. Cf. id. 195: “Sichtbarkeit und Unsichtbarkeit des Sarkophags waren für die Menschen der Kaiserzeit und der Spätantike wohl von eher sekundärer Bedeutung.” For statements similar to those of Dresken-Weiland see already Caillet (1993) 130. Cf. also Brenk (2005) 157: “That an image must be painted or chiselled solely to be viewed is a thoroughly modern idea.”

161 See Turcan (1999) 167: “Elle (sc. l’image, *rd*) est donc, enfin, comme un message, quel qu’en soit le destinataire, y compris le défunt qui se parle à lui-même en parlant de lui-même et pour lui-même à la postérité.”

162 See for an extensive description of the different stages of a Christian burial Rush (1941), emphasising the differences in burial practices before and after Constantine on p. 154; very concise Davies (2004). The burial of the poor gradually became the responsibility of the Church in the fourth century, see Osiek (2008). Cf. RE s.v. Bestattung (Kollwitz) 209: “Im einzelnen schließen sich die B.-gebräuche der Spätantike aufs engste an die der frühen u. mittleren Kaiserzeit an.”

163 See the inscription on the famous sarcophagus of Junius Bassus which recalls the use of a *feretrum* during the funeral. For discussion of the inscription see Cameron (2002). Cf. also RE s.v. Bestattung B. Christlich c. Leichenzug (Kollwitz) 213: “Weniger häufig erwähnt sind Holzsärge (...). Doch dürfte ihre Verwendung bei kleineren Begräbnissen die Regel gewesen sein.”

was buried. Late antique sources do not mention the role of the sarcophagus;¹⁶⁴ therefore—and because of the practical matters already mentioned—the sarcophagus was probably taken from the workshop directly to the grave.¹⁶⁵ This is even more probable since Church Fathers frequently objected to all elements of a funeral that had not directly to do with the salvation of the deceased.¹⁶⁶ Consequently, if the sarcophagus was buried, it was only visible and readable for a short moment at the grave and probably beforehand by those who had ordered the sarcophagus: the deceased or his or her friends or relatives. Since many sarcophagi were ordered during lifetime, their design and outlook might have been discussed among friends.¹⁶⁷ Another case in point is the fact that many people were buried in an already existing sarcophagus of a relative. It is unknown how this practice actually took place.

Sometimes sarcophagi were placed in *mausolea*, but these were often small and only accessible to close relatives. It is not clear whether—and if so in what quantities—sarcophagi inside churches were visible. Some were buried under the floor, but the sarcophagi shown on display in the early mediaeval period suggest that sarcophagi might also have been exposed in this way in late antiquity. Koch has pointed out that only few examples of necropoleis with sarcophagi *sub divo* are left, mostly displaying sarcophagi without (figurative) decoration.¹⁶⁸ Our lack of knowledge of the original spatial position of the sarcophagi considerably complicates the discussion of their visibility.

164 Sometimes modern scholars on Christian funerary rites also ignore the role of sarcophagi. The word 'sarcophagus' is not even mentioned in the book of Rush (1941), entirely devoted to Christian burial.

165 There might have been a gap between death and the finishing of the sarcophagus, see Russell (2011) 141, who does not discuss the moment of transport of sarcophagi to the clients. Cf. Clark (2001) 166 for a translation (possibly) with sarcophagus over more than five miles in the middle of the fourth century.

166 See Rebillard (2003) 143–54. Augustine's *De cura pro mortuis gerenda* is an example of a text that extensively deals with the care for the deceased; he does not explicitly mention sarcophagi.

167 Cf. Meinecke (2014) 134–9 who discusses what we know about burial rituals and also discusses the use of the sarcophagus, albeit for the first to the third century.

168 Koch (2000) 90–8 mentioning sarcophagi *sub divo* in Julia Concordia, Salona and in the East (Asia minor and Syria). Most sarcophagi from the East and also from the Balkan were not decorated and are of minor interest for the present study. The scarce information on the sarcophagi in Julia Concordia also suggests that they were barely decorated; see e.g. Antonini (1960) 12–7; 83–5; 98–100 (p. 99: "Mancano del tutto figurazioni umane (...)", but cf. pp. 46–8 for a sarcophagus with nuptial scenes. The grave of Peter initially was also *sub divo*, as is justly remarked by Jonckheere (2006) 34.

Most people were not buried in a sarcophagus, but had a grave in the catacombs or an earth grave *sub divo* without figurative decoration. Burial chambers decorated with paintings were probably only accessible to family and close friends: the images therefore had a limited audience. Relatively few graves were decorated. Paintings were visible in most cases, but probably not always. Moreover, they certainly did not have their optimum potential effect. The catacombs were dark, small, smelly and humid places: these circumstances did not create an ideal environment for savouring the decoration, nor did they contribute to the production of art of high quality (the paintings in the catacombs had to be produced *in situ*).¹⁶⁹ Potential visibility was more important than readability.¹⁷⁰

The visibility of another group of Christian art objects, reliquaries, can be considered minimal: they were in most cases placed inside the altar, i.e. not visible to anyone.¹⁷¹ Reliquaries might have been visible during processions: certainly when they were brought to the altar, but maybe even more frequently, i.e. each year on the feast day of the saint whose relics the reliquary contained.¹⁷² Even then, probably only few people from the masses attending these feast days were able to 'read' the decoration. The main function of the decoration on reliquaries was honouring God and the saints, whose remains or attributes were stored in them (and were therefore equally invisible).¹⁷³

Apart from apse mosaics, mosaics in churches were often visible with difficulty, because they were small and placed high up in the church.¹⁷⁴ Beat Brenk even argued that the nave was accessible to few people only, so that most people had to look at mosaics in the nave from the other side of the church, but this seems rather unlikely.¹⁷⁵ Nevertheless, it is clear that in general church art

169 Therefore, even if *cubicula* were accessible to all, as is argued by Bodel (2008) 225, the readability of the images was still restricted. Even more so since images would have needed to be really well visible in order to impress people who were only passing by accidentally, heading for another grave.

170 Cf. Zimmermann (2002) 40 and 261, pointing to the fact that paintings were sometimes put on places where they were hardly visible.

171 Kalinowski (2011) 69. In Syria, reliquaries were often visible (p. 44), but not decorated. Cf. Tsuji (2005), especially pp. 203–5.

172 Kalinowski (2011) 25–8.

173 Id. 131–2: "Gleich die Reliquien erhielten auch die Bilder eine über die Sichtbarkeit hinausreichende Wirksamkeit." Cf. Elsner (2013) 224: the Pola casket was an "unseen model for imitation by future generations worshipping in the church at Samagher".

174 Brenk (2005) seems to contradict himself when he first says that the mosaics in the nave of the Santa Maria Maggiore were "clearly visible" (p. 148), but shortly thereafter he states that they were too small and placed too much high up to be seen (p. 150).

175 Id. 149.

was best seen by the clergy, who had access to the altar space.¹⁷⁶ Brenk also argued that the only function of the mosaics was to impress people and to show the wealth of the Church and the emperor, in imitation of the display of *abundantia* found in imperial, secular monuments, like Trajan's column.¹⁷⁷ Although it is evident that the mosaics displayed wealth and prosperity, Brenk seems to offer only a partial solution to the question of visibility: although not as readable as one would expect, the mosaics were executed at high costs and with a specific imagery: on church mosaics we find more coherence in imagery than on most sarcophagi. Art that was used as decoration in churches therefore was at least partly readable and details and explanations might have been provided during sermons or by priests or guides walking around, although there is little evidence for these activities.¹⁷⁸

In addition to the forms of art mentioned above, diptychs circulated as gifts among the very rich.¹⁷⁹ Consular diptychs were distributed by the new consul on the occasion of his inauguration.¹⁸⁰ They were therefore visible, but only among small circles of people. Gold glasses seem to have been a cheaper alternative for gifts among less privileged classes. They might have been used as gifts on feast days. In that case, they were clearly seen by different people, but they were also used in households for various purposes. Most of the gold glasses have been found in Roman catacombs—inserted into the slabs closing *loculi* graves—but also in other regions.¹⁸¹ The bases of these glasses thus

176 For the access of different groups to different parts of churches see e.g. Verstegen (2002).

177 Brenk (2005). Cf. Veyne (2002) about art as an expression of the emperor's power, instead of propaganda. He points to the general phenomenon of invisible art in monuments and sanctuaries in antiquity (p. 10).

178 This is emphasised by Brenk (2005) 150; however, some evidence for guides in churches exists, see 4.2.2.1 below. Moreover, Brenk does not mention the possibility of bishops and priests pointing to the images during their sermons, for which see e.g. Fontaine (1974) 285–7.

179 The idea that diptychs were used for messages is false, see Cutler (1998) 8–9. A diptych was produced to exalt the man who offered it as a gift, id. 17.

180 Cutler (1997) 989.

181 Dresken-Weiland (201b) 73–8, p. 78: “Die Endverwendung vieler Stücke als Schmuck eines Katakombenloculus oder als Grabbeigabe zeigt, dass der Kontext einer Darstellung ihre Bedeutung und Interpretation bestimmt. Die Trennung zwischen Grab und Alltagswelt ist letztlich eine künstliche.” Cf. RAC 11 s.v. Glas (Isings) and Pietri (1961) 307–9, suggesting that glasses were also exchanged on the feast days of saints, e.g. on the 29th of June. Similarly Lønstrup Dal Santo (2008) 37. Février (1983) suggests that gold glasses played a role in funeral banquets and were added to tombs as funerary gifts.

ended up in a funerary context.¹⁸² In that case, they were probably seen by many people, but again, as with the paintings, the catacombs did not invite their visitors to pay much attention to images in the dark and narrow corridors. Private relics, often worn by people at a visible place, were certainly visible, but did not often have figurative decoration.¹⁸³

In sum, 'mobile art' like reliquaries, gold glasses and diptychs was visible, but mostly for a short period of time (reliquaries), under bad conditions (the gold glasses in the catacombs) or within a small group of people (diptychs). All these factors reduced the readability of the objects. Most remaining art was not movable or only with great difficulties: catacomb paintings, sarcophagi and mosaics. The degree of visibility of these objects differed, but bad circumstances of presentation (the catacombs were dark and humid, mosaics in churches were placed high above the ground) and maybe limited access (paintings in *cubicula*) restricted their visibility. The corpus of sarcophagi was at least partly invisible. Therefore, early Christian art was not only produced to be seen by living persons. Some images might have been meant to 'accompany' the deceased or to 'speak' to God and the saints in order to gain a place in heaven by showing the deceased's devotion and adherence to Christianity. Or the images may have been believed to guarantee the presence of God or the saints by depicting them.¹⁸⁴

Art thus had a twofold audience: a human audience and a 'transcendental audience' consisting of God and the saints. However, this varied audience does not seem to have been taken into account in the production process of art. In other words, it does not seem necessary (and given the many uncertainties that still exist on this matter it seems impossible) to distinguish art via its implied audience. We are primarily bound to try to reveal the possible meanings attributed to objects of art by the makers (i.e. commissioners), the appreciation by those who consumed early Christian art can only be discussed with great prudence.¹⁸⁵ The matter is further complicated by the fact that both

182 It is not clear whether this funerary purpose was already aimed at by the producers of gold glasses, but it is hard to assume that they were created exclusively to be broken again (and used as markers of *loculi*).

183 See for private relics and reliquaries Kalinowski (2011) 71–2.

184 Francis (2003b) 586–7.

185 Among other things because they cannot always be assumed to have understood what was depicted. The same is true for commissioners of art, see Zanker (2000) 219: "Wirkliche Kenner waren auch damals selten, der durchschnittliche Auftraggeber hat sich bei seinen Bestellungen an dem orientiert, was üblich war."

decorated and undecorated examples of sarcophagi and decorated and undecorated rooms in the catacombs exist, but do not seem to have had a different status.¹⁸⁶ Maybe this phenomenon reflects both the pagan tradition of showing off one's wealth and the only slowly developing Christian ideas about the union of the wealthy and the Christian Church.¹⁸⁷

Regarding art that was actually visible, it was probably more often seen by the elite than by ordinary people. Sarcophagi were probably visited by relatives and friends of the deceased on several occasions after the funeral and afterwards on the anniversary of someone's death.¹⁸⁸ Moreover, public art, e.g. mosaics in churches, was probably understood with great difficulty by the average church-goer, both due to his restricted knowledge of Christian doctrine and the physical obstacles to a good view on the images.¹⁸⁹

Similarly, much poetry never reached the common man. Juvenius and Proba wrote poetry that apparently was of little interest for the uneducated mass: why read or listen to the story of the gospels in (sometimes obscure) hexameters if there was a plain prose version available?¹⁹⁰ This seems to demand a kind of literary curiosity that was more often found with the elite. A desire to hear the story of the gospels chronologically could have been a reason to be interested in Juvenius' epic for other than stylistic reasons, but the idea of taking the four gospels together in one narrative was not innovative: it had

186 Sarcophagi: Dresken-Weiland (2003) 193–4. Catacombs: Zimmermann (2002) 257. Many decorated reliquaries were aniconic, see Kalinowski (2011) 133.

187 See Brown (2012): only at the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth century, the truly rich people of Rome entered the Church. Referring to Matt 19.24, Brown calls this period the "Age of the Camel", see p. xxiv.

188 The third, ninth, thirtieth and fortieth day are mentioned in the sources, see Rebillard (2003) 156–9. The restricted accessibility of graves might have diminished the number of visits. Moreover, these visits lost popularity anyway during the third century, see Meinecke (2014) 142–4.

189 It is for these reasons that Brenk (2005)—extremely sceptical about the people's capability of understanding Christian theology—concludes (p. 150): "It seems therefore that this sort of Christian church art (i.e. paintings and mosaics, *rd*) was primarily a matter for the literate elite, such as Paulinus of Nola, Ambrose, Sulpicius Severus etc."

190 Cf. also Gärtner (2004) 443 for a theological argument against versifications of the Bible: "Abgesehen von dem formalen Gegenargument, daß man aus einem Sein kein Sollen folgern darf, ließe sich hiergegen einwenden, daß, wenn eine metrische Form der nicht-metrischen Partien der Heiligen Schrift vonnöten wäre, der Heilige Geist (den man gemeinhin hinter der Gesamtkomposition der Bibel wirksam sieht) diese Partien schon von vornherein so gestaltet hätte."

been applied before in a prose work by Tatian (second century). Proba's poetry certainly must have been entirely unintelligible for people who did not know Vergil (and the Bible) by heart.

On the other hand, public recitations of poetry were not uncommon in late antiquity. Christian testimonies include the recitation of Arator's Biblical epic of the book of Acts.¹⁹¹ Recitation was also part of classical literary culture.¹⁹² Furthermore, many late antique poems concern topics that were particularly popular among common men: martyr stories. We know that Paulinus' *natalicia* were recited before a crowd of pilgrims of varied social background and place of origin: maybe some of Prudentius' martyr hymns were used to the same end. Poetry also had its part in liturgy (Ambrose's hymns) and in ecclesiastical education (Gregory of Nazianzus, Amphilochius). Damasus composed epigrams for the graves of the martyrs which were visited by pilgrims of very diverging backgrounds, both in social standing and education. The *tituli*, written by Ambrose, Prudentius and Paulinus, are comparable in this respect. After all, poetry seems to have become more ubiquitous in late antiquity and therefore also to have reached a wider audience than before.¹⁹³ Still, most poetry first and foremost reached an upper class, but the appeal that Christianity had on all classes of society together with its egalitarian character (e.g. reflected by one common liturgy) enlarged the scope of poetry. However, the production of poetry firmly remained in the hands of a small group of elite people.

4.1.5 Identity

The identity of both individuals and groups is for a large part formed by cultural aspects. These aspects can be expressed in objects of art and in texts. The emergence of Christian art and poetry testifies to the formation of a Christian identity for the whole Christian community, but especially for the higher classes that were used to living in a world in which these two media were omnipresent. Aristocrats could surround themselves with these signs of higher culture. Not only were they able to pay for it, but they had also received the education necessary to decode the imagery used in images and poems. This is most strongly the case with poetry, one of the most difficult and (therefore) most appreciated forms of text in late antiquity. Aristocrats could thus show off their social standing by means of art and texts. This implies that the choice of certain scenes in which the apostles are present not only reveals aspects of the

191 Cameron (2004) 346–7; Gnllka (2001b) 220 (notes 47–8).

192 See e.g. Auerbach (1958) 177–86.

193 Cameron (2006) 17–8. Cf. Carrié (2001). *Pace* Gnllka (2001b) 220 and Roberts (1989) 121.

representation of the apostles, but also of the self-representation (or identity) of poets, commissioners of art and texts and the intended audience.¹⁹⁴

Since craftsmen worked on order, they did not have the possibility to express their identity via the objects they produced. By contrast, poets were bound by social and ecclesiastical conventions, but had a larger degree of freedom in their work because in most cases they were themselves part of the leading class. Especially in later poets such as Damasus, Gregory and Paulinus, self-representation of poets becomes an important aspect of Christian poetry. It is unclear whether any of the poems from the corpus investigated in this book was written on demand; therefore, commissioners of poetical texts who potentially used poetry to express their own identity remain hidden from our view. By contrast, images were certainly ordered by people other than those who produced them. They could use depictions of the apostles to communicate a certain image of themselves. Moreover, they decided which audience the images should address. Logically, the images somehow appealed to the intended audience and they might have been meant to shape the identity of this audience too.

Identity could also be created via pagan imagery. The late antique examples of decoration from villas indeed confirm that traditional subjects remained popular. It is important to emphasise that most early Christian art comes from a funerary context. In the funerary realm the need for Christianisation of imagery in art was apparently more strongly felt than elsewhere. A funerary context is more likely to invite people to address fundamental issues about life and death (in the Christian case in connection to one's own position in the hereafter) than art in general. Therefore, many members of the elite chose a sarcophagus or *cubiculum* with Christian themes.

Status and concerns about the hereafter both determined the choice of scenes on sarcophagi.¹⁹⁵ The apostles were suitable characters in this process of identity shaping. Especially Peter and Paul were important in early Christian culture. They were the apostles about whom most information was available.

194 The elite was of course a varied group of people from the higher circles and the traditional and ecclesiastical elite were not always the same. The degree to which the Christian elite was independent from ecclesiastical hierarchy is difficult to determine. See for some considerations, Bowes (2008), e.g. 217–26, emphasising the gap between the bishops in the cities and the traditional elite in the countryside. Cf. Brown (2012).

195 Cf. for pagan sarcophagi e.g. Amedick (2010) who points to the relatively frugal decoration of imperial sarcophagi and the need for men lower in hierarchy to use mythological themes to show events of which direct representation was restricted to higher placed people. This aspect seems of less significance in the early Christian period, maybe due to Christianity's emphasis on the equality of all men for God.

Peter was the leader of the apostles, appealing to the elite of late antiquity that took the responsibility of leadership in society. Moreover, especially Paul was presented as an intellectual in the Bible, in contrast with the other apostles. He could therefore appeal to the upper class in Roman society, for which education was closely connected to social standing. It is to be expected, therefore, that representations of Peter and Paul in particular reflect the aspects of leadership and intellectualism. Important Biblical passages in which these aspects are reflected are Matt 16.18–9 and Paul's speech on the Areopagus (Acts 17.22–34).

However, the group of the twelve apostles also had an important place in early Christian thought. The twelve had a double image that made them suitable for identification by people from different social classes. In art, all apostles were presented as wise and learned men from early times onwards, the Biblical account notwithstanding: they were depicted as philosophers and were associated with the authorship of parts of the New Testament. In texts they were also presented as wise men. This side of their representation made them acceptable for the well-educated elite.

On the other hand, the apostles had a humble social background and showed an obvious failure to understand Christ in the gospels. Their lack of education was sometimes emphasised in early Christian literature and even considered praiseworthy in passages such as 1 Cor 1.18–30.¹⁹⁶ Therefore, the apostles were also characters with whom ordinary Christians could probably easily identify.

Both the ordinary and intellectual image of the apostles played a role in early Christian thought. The apostles were presented as intermediaries between Christ and men, since they had transmitted Christian dogma and had established Christian communities throughout the world. Especially bishops—claiming to be the successors of the apostles—but also the lower clergy were important factors in creating a Christian identity. Given their significant role in the production of early Christian art and poetry, it is expected that the functions of the apostles mentioned above are found in both media.

4.2 *Word and Image*

The nature of the relationship between word and image in late antiquity is fundamental to the present investigation. A brief *status quaestionis* is given

196 Cf. 1 Cor 1.18–20: “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.’ Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?”

in this section (4.2.1). The relationship of art and poetry is further discussed in the second part of the section (4.2.2), which includes an elaborate discussion of the *tituli* (4.2.2.1). These short texts form the most direct link between poetry and art in the Christian culture of the third and fourth centuries. My own approach to art and poetry and that to the relationship between the two is explained in the last three sections (4.2.2.3–5).

4.2.1 Modern Scholarship on the Antique Word-Image Relationship

In an article from 2006, Averill Cameron called Roberts' book *The Jeweled Style* "a notable exception" of scholarly work devoted to questions concerning the relationship between late antique art and poetry or literature in general.¹⁹⁷ Although one might criticise Roberts' book for the restricted amount of material on which it is based and put the alleged novelty of the concept in late antiquity in perspective,¹⁹⁸ the book does offer an important contribution to the field in its encouragement to explore the relationship between different forms of cultural expression.¹⁹⁹ This seems to be a promising direction of research, since poetry and art were both produced by or on demand of the same small elite of well-to-do and literate people. In many cases, it was the same elite that consumed late antique art and poetry (cf. 4.1.4).

Michael Roberts signalles a preference for small details over large-scale narratives in late antique poetry as well as a preference for the miniature (e.g. mosaic stones) in late antique art. He entitled this phenomenon "the jeweled style". Roberts emphasises that Christian poetry of the period is first and foremost characterised by the notion of *utilitas*, i.e. by didactic purposes. The poets treating New Testament material—which is obviously most relevant to the study at hand—would have been less preoccupied with the jeweled style than poets of pagan and Old Testament poetry.²⁰⁰ However, Roberts' idea of poetry

197 In addition, Cameron refers to a book by Miller, who "dares to address questions of aesthetics, which most scholars have preferred to avoid", see Cameron (2006) 19 (note 40); Miller (2001) and Miller (2000). Cameron's statement seems to be confirmed by the index of the journal *Word and image*, which shows only few studies on classical or late antiquity. A notable exception is the valuable study by Duggan (1989).

198 So Hall (1991) 359–60, who doubts the usefulness of the concept of late antique aesthetics as defined by Roberts, because the latter retraces this aesthetics in the first century already. Roberts' ideas are not entirely new, text passages in late antique poetry are already compared to "Mosaikteilchen" by Mehmel (1940) 127.

199 Roberts' book has recently been reprinted (2011), which testifies to its continuing influence. At the APA conference of 2011, the Society for Late Antiquity organised a panel (section 27) centred on Roberts' book.

200 Roberts (1989) 131.

and art as creations of the same cultural sphere is valid for New Testament poetry and art too.²⁰¹

After Roberts, Patricia Cox Miller, among others, emphasised the predominance of small elements in late antiquity. She pointed to the growing interest in relics, parts of the bodies of holy men and women that represent the saint.²⁰² Elsner has connected the late antique “*pars pro toto* interest” (especially cento-writing) to the use of *spolia* in late antiquity.²⁰³ Miller also discussed the imaginative nature of Christianity: from the very beginnings of Christianity, its followers were used to being addressed in imaginative, allegorical language (e.g. the parables in the gospels). Every word in the Scriptures had an infinite range of possible meanings. Exegesis could reveal this world behind the obvious meaning of a word. Although this attitude is not unique to Christianity, it might well have stimulated imagination in early Christian culture.²⁰⁴ Visuality indeed seems—the second commandment notwithstanding—an inevitable form in which Christian ideas were to become expressed.²⁰⁵ Word and image thus were combined on a fundamental level in early Christian culture. Apart from allegorical elements in the Bible, the Christian preference for allegory has also been interpreted as a necessary tool to unite the classical and Christian heritage.²⁰⁶ However, the allegorical nature of Christianity and the need to unite the Old and New Testament seem to have been the most important factors.

In recent years, the alleged textual bias in art history (which sees images as derivative of texts rather than as independent objects of art) has been extensively investigated for the classical period. One of the studies devoted to the topic is Michael Squire’s *Image and Text in Graeco-Roman Antiquity*, which

201 See Roberts (1989) 66–121.

202 Miller (1998) 125–33.

203 See e.g. Elsner (2004) 292–3. The cento was not a new literary form in late antiquity but it was a genre *en vogue* due to the particular reverence for Vergil and Homer. Ausonius’ letter accompanying his *Cento nuptialis*—in which he prescribes the rules a good cento should follow—is the most obvious example of late antique interest in this kind of literature.

204 Miller (2001) 1–11; cf. Cameron (2005) 5–7; similarly Onians (1980). A strong example is the latter’s discussion of people describing figurative patterns on marble slabs (pp. 7–10)—an antique equivalent of modern cloud spotting, according to Onians—which led him to conclude (p. 10): “We are used to congratulate ourselves on the fact that we can see things that they (i.e. people in earlier times, *rd*) could not, but it is just as important to realize that they too could see things which are invisible to us.”

205 Cameron (2005) 5.

206 Stella (2007) 46.

argues for a more text-independent evaluation of visual material.²⁰⁷ Squire emphasised that images were not only based on texts, but also were a source of inspiration for authors of texts in antiquity. Moreover, even when images are found that accompanied texts (or texts that accompanied images), the depictions can (deliberately) deviate from the text: in that case, the painter-writer (or both painter and writer) referred to different traditions at the same time. Squire tried to show that images in antiquity were understood as bearers of meaning, whereas classicists in his view tend to look for confirmation of possible interpretations of an image in texts.²⁰⁸ Although Squire's study focused on Pompeian wall paintings, the discussion about the so-called *tituli* or captions in verse (see below) reveals its value for the study of late antiquity: it has often been tried to retrieve the lost images 'behind' the *tituli* by assuming that all important elements of the pictures were described in accompanying verses, rather than attributing a central place to the images and considering that the *tituli* might discuss a topic other than what was seen.²⁰⁹

At the same time, some characteristics of the early Christian period clearly separate it from the pagan culture of classical antiquity from which it emerged. The relationship between word and image is fundamentally different. The idea of a canon which defined orthodoxy was not known in antiquity's traditional religions: artists had more license to choose their subject matter in that respect. The authority attributed to the canon of the Bible in late antiquity meant a restriction of that license. Whenever a Biblical subject was chosen to be depicted or described, only one tradition existed that was accepted by the Church: the version written in the Bible. It seems therefore that a dependency on texts was more probable for Christian images than for images made in pagan art.²¹⁰ In the case of depictions of stories that are not found in the Bible, textual evidence is not necessary to explain the choice of imagery. Oral tradition also played an important role.²¹¹ A certain license for poets, painters, sculptors and other craftsmen in the choice of elements of minor importance, not based on texts, is not to be excluded.²¹² However, even if an image is not

207 Squire (2009); similarly *The Parallel Worlds of Classical Art and Text* by Jocelyn Penny Small (2003).

208 Squire (2009) attributes this attitude to Lutheran Protestantism, see pp. 15–40. Whether this is the case or not is of less importance here: what is relevant is the recorded tendency to a preferential treatment of texts over images.

209 E.g. by Pillinger (1980).

210 See Elsner (2004) 284 about the Christian dependency of a textual canon as one of the fundamental differences between Christian and pagan (secular) art.

211 Moreover, the fact that many apocryphal writings are lost makes it difficult to judge whether an image had a textual source or not.

212 Cf. Engemann (1997) 41–2.

directly derived from a textual source, e.g. the *Dominus legem dat* scene, which is traditionally called *traditio legis*, it is only with the help of texts that its meaning can be determined. The main difference between art and text seems to be the degree of accuracy in attribution of meaning which is reached by words and cannot be equalled by images.²¹³

In the field of late antiquity studies, several scholars have tried to compare the literary work of a specific author with the art of the period. Prudentius and Paulinus are remarkable examples of poets who worked in the field of art and poetry. Prudentius described some paintings and works of architecture, especially in his *Peristephanon*. However, the only study specifically devoted to the influence of art on the poet's work, written by Avery Springer, investigated the *Cathemerinon* in relation to the images in the catacombs only and did not result in significant conclusions regarding a reciprocal influence of poetry and images.²¹⁴ Other scholars have discussed the interest in art shown in the works of Damasus, Ambrose, Prudentius and Paulinus of Nola, especially in the light of their building activities and the *tituli* they wrote.

Similar to Springer is a study by Alejandro Vaganzones from 1986, in which Damasus' first epigram on Paul is used to explain three enigmatic scenes in the *cubiculum* of Leo in the catacombs of Domitilla (allegedly depicting Paul's vision of the third heaven).²¹⁵ Regrettably, it is not clear what exactly proves influence of Damasus rather than influence of the Biblical text. Moreover, it is more likely that the vision of Paul is not depicted at all in the *cubiculum* (see for further discussion 2.1.3.2).

Poetry in general is only rarely discussed in relationship to art, but there are a few exceptions. C. W. Mönnich devoted a chapter to visuality in early Christian poetry and noticed its lack of capability to describe the divine.²¹⁶

213 See Duggan (1989), esp. pp. 240–5, and Fontaine (1974) 286, about imagery in art: “Ce langage n'est pas celui des écrivains, car il n'a pas la diversité et les ressources infinies des mots.”

214 Springer (1984). The parallels found by Springer seem primarily due to the common source of *Cathemerinon* and catacomb paintings: the Bible. Others are so common, that they do not seem to prove any influence of paintings on the poem. Moreover, it is improbable that Prudentius was only influenced by the art of the catacombs and not by other categories of art; works by Prudentius other than the *Cathemerinon* are not taken into account.

215 Vaganzones (1986). The Biblical story is found in 2 Cor 12.2–4.

216 Mönnich (1990) 87–120. In a commentary on seven hymns from Prudentius' *Peristephanon*, Fux (2003) discusses Prudentius' poetry and the arts on pp. 15–6 and 35–8. Greco, Voza et al. (1998) 95–110 oppose details from the Adelfia sarcophagus to texts from Juvenius and Prudentius, but without further reflection. Paleani (1986) explained the choice of depictions of martyrs in some catacombs through Damasus' epigrams. Literature on the

The style of Biblical epic was compared to cycles of images in churches by Angelika Geyer, building on the work of Roberts:²¹⁷ the first decoration (and construction) of a major church by a pope instead of an emperor (Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome) was characterised by stylistic features that were also detected in the Biblical epic of the fourth and fifth centuries:

Hier sind zu nennen Schwerpunktbildung in der Konzentration auf einzelne Szenen bis hin zur Verfestigung zu ausgestalteten ‚Geschehnisinseeln‘, vor allem Wundern, häufige Entfaltung bukolischer Staffage, Emotionalisierung und schließlich Romanisierung bis hin zur Übertragung des vergilischen Imperiumsgedankens und damit der Erfüllungs- und Zukunftsperspektive auf Christus, das heißt der Integration allegorisch-exegetischer Komponenten.²¹⁸

This description indeed fits that of Juvenius' epic, written about a century before the basilica was built and decorated: concentration on particular scenes, dramatising of the account and Romanisation are commonly known characteristics of Biblical epic. The first aspect shows the influence of the rhetorical nature of late antique education and may also be related to Roberts' jeweled style.²¹⁹ Studies such as those cited above have pointed to highly interesting parallels between art and poetry, but their rather general observations might be enriched by closer analysis of individual texts and objects of art.

tituli is found below, that on Damasus, Ambrose and Paulinus and their building activities in 1.5, 1.6 and 1.11 respectively.

217 Geyer (2005). Other studies include McDonald (1933), esp. 151–5, who argued that the fifth-century poet Sedulius worked in Southern Gaul or Spain on the basis of his treatment of the massacre of the innocents and the three women at the sepulchre, which deviates from the Biblical account in the same way as some visual representations only found in those regions. Cottas (1931) tried to retrace the influence of the tragedy *Χριστὸς Πάσχων* (now generally dated in the twelfth century, but believed by Cottas and others to have been written by Gregory of Nazianzus, see pp. 170–1) on early mediaeval art.

218 Geyer (2005) 319. She also sees a structural common element (p. 320): in epics and cycles about the Old Testament, the focus is on the narrative aspects of the stories, in New Testament equivalents exegesis has a more important role. Cf. also Grüner (2004) 24, discussing the simultaneous emergence of roman lyric poetry and paintings in the so-called second style during Rome's civil wars: "das Ergebnis eines geistesgeschichtlichen Wandels, dessen Ursache in der intellektuellen Durchdringung des Hellenismus seitens der römische Aristokratie liegt". He tries to find the common ground of poetry and arts in their shared aesthetics (see e.g. p. 10).

219 Roberts (2007) 147.

4.2.2 Reflections and Methods

The earliest figurative art that was undisputedly Christian—in the house church of Dura Europos and thereafter in the catacombs of Rome—appeared earlier than Christian poetry, especially since a Christian poetic tradition actually started with Juvenius, around 330. In that time, Christian figurative art was known for decades in the catacombs and Christian sarcophagi had become more and more common.

Constantine stimulated both Christian literature and the arts. For the first time, considerable Christian churches were built. The production of Christian sarcophagi expanded enormously. Within few decades, Christianity became fashionable among the elite of the empire; its new political and social status was translated into the cultural forms of art and poetry that belonged to the realm of the elite. The arts commissioned by the Church—one might think of church decorations, but also of improvements on the access to and decoration of the catacombs and of the production of objects of devotion—were certainly designed by people who were connected with Christian poets. Sometimes these two groups even fell together: famous examples are Damasus, Ambrose and Paulinus of Nola. But most other poets were also men of the Church and undoubtedly had contact with people involved in the commissioning of art.

4.2.2.1 Tituli

The most obvious link between art and poetry in early Christian times are the so-called *tituli* or (verse) captions: epigrams that probably accompanied images.²²⁰ Collections of them have been transmitted on the names of Ambrose, Prudentius and Paulinus.²²¹ The actual use of these *tituli* has been discussed intensively, in particular in the case of Ambrose's *tituli*, which cannot be ascribed to the Milanese bishop with certainty. Both because of the extensive scholarly debate on the *tituli* and because of the specific importance these poems have for this study, they deserve to be discussed in detail.

²²⁰ A phenomenon more or less similar to *tituli* and images seems the illustrated codex, but our information about such *codices* is scarce. The first remaining codex with illustrations dates from the beginning of the fifth century (*Vergilius Vaticanus*). Only a few sketchy drawings on papyri remain. Moreover, little to nothing is known about the commissioners and makers of the images, see Zimmermann (1998). Cf. Dareggi (1995) 44–7 and Hempel (1963) 591–2.

²²¹ Gregory might have written *tituli* of a sort too, see 1.9.2. Cf. also the *Miracula Christi*, which were once wrongly attributed to Claudian (1.7.3).

Fortunately, given the scarcity of ancient sources on the actual function of different forms of art, the use of *tituli* was described by Paulinus of Nola. For him, the *tituli* had a practical function (c. 27,580–5):

580 Propterea uisum nobis opus utile totis
 Felicis domibus pictura ludere sancta,
 si forte adtonitas haec per spectacula mentes
 agrestum caperet fucata coloribus umbra,
 quae super exprimitur titulis, ut littera monstret
 585 quod manus explicuit (...).

This is why we thought it useful to enliven all the houses²²² of Felix with paintings on sacred themes, in the hope that the shadow painted with colours would excite the minds—stupefied through these miracles—of the rustics. This shadow is explained above by inscriptions, so that the text reveals what the hand has painted.²²³

This passage seems to provide information about the position of the *tituli*, which is one of the most important aspects of the discussion of the captions.²²⁴ If they were depicted at eye level or somewhat higher on the walls, their function as captions of images seems clear. But if the *tituli* were depicted in the apse or above the accompanying pictures in the nave, it was not possible to read them at all.²²⁵ Tomas Lehmann seems to be right in considering *super* an adverb and *quae* referring to *umbra*, but this can result in several different readings. The most probable interpretation is either that the *tituli* were placed above the pictures or that *super* means ‘moreover’, as Paulinus has it more often in his work. In the latter case, no information about the position of the *tituli* can be deduced from this passage. Lehmann takes this stand.²²⁶ However,

222 Goldschmidt (1940) 65 translates ‘(sc. to embellish) Felix’s houses all over’, Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 332 renders the passage as ‘(sc. divertir) dans la demeure de Félix tout entière’.

223 Translation of Paulinus’ poems are taken from Walsh (1975), with slight adaptations.

224 Of course the singularity of the remark augments the risk of considering Paulinus representative of practices in the whole Mediterranean world instead of a local practice in Campania: the possibility of more variety in the use and function of the *tituli* has to be kept in mind.

225 Belting-Ihm (1994) 842.

226 See Lehmann (2004) 212–3, similarly in id. (2010) 121–3. Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 347 agrees with Lehmann, but states that *super* is connected with *quae*, meaning

the word *super* inevitably evokes the idea that the images are placed above the *tituli*. This information unfortunately does not clarify that the *tituli* were readable, since we do not know exactly where the images were applied, nor how large the letters of the *tituli* were (but see below).

Our information on church decoration until the year 400 is scarce: no original decoration survives intact.²²⁷ No example of a cycle of images at eye level in a church has remained (not even a description), but neither has information about the position of images and *tituli* which excludes that they were clearly visible. It seems most reasonable to assume that they could be read.²²⁸

I define *tituli* as verse captions written to accompany or pretended to have been written to accompany images.²²⁹ It is difficult to determine whether a poem can be considered a *titulus* or not.²³⁰ Most of the arguments which are used to proof the *tituli's* practical use do not help to distinguish between 'real' and fictitious ones.²³¹ However, general characteristics of a *titulus* seem to be short length and the lack of a punch line. Especially Ambrose's *tituli* are

that the pictures are above the *tituli*. Lehmann's reading seems more logical. Cf. Korol (2004) 154 for other examples of the position of *tituli* in churches (especially note 52).

227 See Creissen (2011) for a concise overview of the material, also about church furniture. We do have some evidence from house churches.

228 In a discussion with Kessler printed with her article (pp. 885–6), Belting-Ihm (1994) is willing to accept the idea that in the "nicht allzu grosse" *Basilica nova* the inscriptions were readable, since Paulinus himself expresses the idea that people who were able to read, read the *tituli* to other visitors. Nevertheless, she adds: "Welche Bedeutung begleitende Tituli für die immer wieder angeführten leseunkundigen Adressaten monumentaler Bildzyklen wirklich hatten, bleibt jedoch unklar."

229 Cf. Arnulf (1997) 9 (note 1). This definition of *tituli* is not always used, as Arnulf correctly states. This can e.g. be seen in Pietri (1988), who discusses *tituli* but does not take in account those of Ambrose and Prudentius (he does not even mention the latter), since for him metre is not a criterion for 'titulicity'. His *tituli* seem to include all epigraphic material from Christian churches (classification on pp. 141–4).

230 Cf. Neumüllers-Klauser (1998) 329: "(...) überspitzt formuliert: jeder Titulus kann auch als Epigramm angesehen werden (...)."

231 This is also stressed by Lehmann (2010) 110–2. Examples are the use of demonstratives and use of tenses (the present tense would then point to what was actually seen), see Pillinger (1980) 13 for these and other arguments. Cf. the judgement of Bernt (1968) 4: "Was die echte Aufschrift von der fingierten unterscheidet, ist weder ihre Form noch ihr Inhalt, sondern allein ihre Funktion." As to the use of demonstratives, Brockhaus (1872) 268 emphasises that this is a feature of texts clarifying miniatures or mosaics.

often hardly imaginable as independent poems with any poetical value on their own.²³²

The manuscript containing the *tituli* of Ambrose—which is now lost, but was cited in the first printed edition of 1589 by Juret—mentioned that the *tituli* were exhibited in the *Basilica martyrum*. The Karolingian manuscripts that transmitted Prudentius' *Dittochaeon*, indicate it as *tituli historiarum*, a term that seems to point to captions.²³³ The cycles of *tituli* by Ambrose (21 *tituli*, probably incomplete) and Prudentius (47 *tituli*) are the earliest Christian cycles of *tituli* that are (partially) extant.²³⁴

Clemens Brockhaus has focused on the thematic characteristics of the *Dittochaeon* and compared the stories described in the *tituli* to themes in Christian art of Prudentius' time (unfortunately without clarifying his data).²³⁵ He found correspondences in the popularity of scenes between both media, which seems to point to a relationship. The stories that are described elaborately by Prudentius almost all occur in art too, and in some cases Prudentius seems to have been directly inspired by the visual tradition. According to Brockhaus, this sufficiently proves the poet's dependency of visual imagery.²³⁶ Brockhaus also refers to the fact that art and poetry had the same source, the Bible, which provided the themes. The influence of art on Prudentius seems clear, but this does not prove that the *Dittochaeon* consists of real *tituli*.

The most important general argument in favour of the *tituli*'s use as captions is Paulinus. Why would he introduce poetic passages in a prose letter (*ep.* 32) to describe the imagery in his churches, if not because they were actually seen? This text is a counter-argument to the position of Brenk (among

232 Cf. Bernt (1968) 4–42, but also Arnulf (1997) (p. 26 in particular), for the criteria of epigrams in antiquity. On pp. 33–5 he discusses the very short *tituli* in Pausanias.

233 See Davis-Weyer (1986) 20.

234 Arnulf (1997) discusses the *tituli* of Ambrose, Prudentius, Paulinus and Rusticius Helpidius extensively, but also provides an overview of other *tituli* known from late antiquity, see pp. 137–45. The incompleteness of Ambrose's *tituli* might have been caused by the fact that the walls that bore them were partly destroyed already when the *tituli* were copied to other materials. Cf. Merkle (1896) 192–5 for the fragility of *tituli*.

235 See Brockhaus (1872) 220–71. Brockhaus points to the differences between the *Dittochaeon* and the art of the catacombs, which seems to suggest that there was no specific connection between the two, see p. 269. Brockhaus' following chapter ("Ueber Zusammenhang und Tendenz der altchristlichen Poesie und Kunst", pp. 272–305) is disappointing: his investigation of Prudentius' archaeological significance in the foregoing chapter reveals more about the relationship between art and poetry than this last chapter of the book.

236 Brockhaus (1872) 262, examples on pp. 263–5.

others), who argued that the *tituli* were a literary genre that only pretended to have a practical function:

Allein die Tatsache des Abschreibens und Sammelns solcher Tituli—soweit es nicht aus rein historisch-antiquarischem Interesse am Gegenstand erfolgt—zeigt, daß den Gedichten ein selbständiges literarisches Interesse gilt, auch wenn sie vom Trägergegenstand getrennt sind.²³⁷

In opposition to Brenk, one could also argue that the writing down of *tituli* as separate poems with titles does not exclude their use in churches. Moreover, Bernt admits that antiquarianism could be a reason for collecting the *tituli*. In the same way Damasus' epigrams—the functioning of which in churches has been attested archaeologically—were written down by pilgrims who had visited the tombs of martyrs.

Tomas Lehmann suggests that the word *tituli* in Paulinus' poem refers both to names written in an image as well as to titles of images, but not necessarily to epigrams in the style of Prudentius' *Dittochaeon*.²³⁸ Due to the distance between the viewer and the location of the texts, the *tituli* would either have been hardly visible or extraordinary large, which is deemed improbable for aesthetic reasons. However, even if we assume with Lehmann that the *tituli* were barely visible, this does not imply that they were not depicted.²³⁹ Images too were often barely visible, as we have seen, which means that visibility and especially readability were not as important as we might consider it nowadays.

Apart from the aspect of physical visibility, another argument raised against the idea that *tituli* in churches had any effect, is the high degree of illiteracy in late antiquity. One should take into account, however, that the epigrams might also have been attached to the walls to impress illiterate people. In that case the *tituli* added prestige through their mere presence as texts: an idea confirmed by Damasus' care for the engraving of his epigrams. *Tituli* probably invoked an association with the Holy Scripture and added solemnity and authority to images in churches. Maybe it was implied by the commissioners of the decoration programme that pilgrims somehow would take the effort to copy them and spread them across Europe (as people actually did with

²³⁷ Brenk (1983) 30. Similarly Döpp (1983) 230.

²³⁸ Lehmann (2010) 124.

²³⁹ This is not to mention the fact that if the *tituli* were just written names and exhibited at a place where they were barely visible, they could not have been read either. Also in this case unreadable or even invisible *tituli* were depicted.

Damasus' epigrams). Although most of the people were illiterate, the habit of reading aloud might have contributed to the use of the *tituli*: those who could not read heard them read aloud by spectators around them.²⁴⁰ Paulinus refers to this practice in the verse after the passage cited above, which reads (c. 27,585–6): (...) *dumque omnes picta uicissim / ostendunt releguntque sibi* (...). However, earlier in the text, Paulinus had already mentioned the *rusticitas non cassa fide neque docta legendi* (v. 548).²⁴¹ Most probably, Paulinus' churches were visited by a mixed crowd and Paulinus' text reflects the varied approach of the *tituli* among the pilgrims.²⁴² Special guides or people working in the church could have provided explanations for what could not be read—as is the case in Prudentius' *Peristephanon* 9,17—deriving their knowledge from the artist or priest who commissioned the decoration programme (including the *tituli*), in case of restricted readability.²⁴³

Of course, a priest could also write the *tituli* himself and use them to contribute to his own prestige, as Paulinus did in his correspondence with Severus.²⁴⁴ This was another way to disseminate the *tituli* of a particular church outside the local community and might even have stimulated people to visit the church where the *tituli* belonged. The *tituli* are to be seen as a literary genre, which does not exclude their 'practical' function; a genre that was part of the popular literary tradition of epigram writing. Although fictive votive inscriptions

240 Cf. Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 348–54, who also dismisses Lehmann's hypothesis, but supports her own view by explaining the function of the *tituli* in Paulinus' catechetical project as a priest. About reading aloud in general in antiquity see e.g. Busch (2002) for a *status quaestionis* and examination of the available evidence.

241 C. 27,585–6: 'So when all the countryfolk point out and read over to each other the subjects painted (...)' C. 27,548: '(...) countryfolk not without belief but unskilled in reading.'

242 Cf. Brenk (2005) 150–1 (note 40), commenting upon these passages: "It becomes clear that Paulinus' explanation of the function of the image was invented *ad hoc*."

243 *perist.* 9,17 is referred to by Notermans (2007) 252. Gualandri (1992) 23 refers to guides who explained inscriptions: "Nei santuari, le iscrizioni che celebrano i santi e ne accompagnano le immagini rischiano di essere senza significato se qualcuno—spesso un guardino—non le decifra per i pellegrini." Pietri (1988) 149 also assumes that the *aedituus* (Gaul) or *ostiarius* (Italy) explained the *tituli*, but his argumentation seems to be based on later sources, although the word *aedituus* is also found in Prud. *perist.* 9,17. Brenk (2005) 150 is sceptical about guides in churches. He does not mention the possibility that priests could refer to images or *tituli*, nor the passage of *Peristephanon* 9.

244 See Paulinus of Nola *ep.* 3; 6; 9; 12, cf. Guttilla (1995) 63–4. Cf. Bernt (1968) 77, for an example of what might be called 'fictive modesty' in Paulinus' gift of *tituli* to Severus. Bernt does consider the Prudentian *tituli* to be fictive, see in particular *id.* pp. 68–74.

in verses are well-known, no clear fictive series is known to us from antiquity, which reinforces the impression that the *tituli* were actually written as captions in churches.²⁴⁵

In fact, it appears that Prudentius' *tituli* are the most complicated case: Ambrose had provided an example of *tituli* that could be imitated in a mere literary form. His *tituli* are less elaborate and seem less suitable for a purely literary context. Moreover, the practical application of these *tituli* is confirmed by a note in a manuscript: without further evidence to the contrary, it seems most reasonable to accept its content. Paulinus discussed his *tituli* himself and there seems no reason not to trust his utterances in this respect. The *tituli* of Prudentius, however, are transmitted without any remark about their original use. Moreover, they seem more suitable to have served as poems on their own. Nevertheless, some reasons remain to consider his *tituli* as such: in the (Karolingian) manuscript, the *tituli* are considered captions.²⁴⁶ The *tituli* are not mentioned in Prudentius' *praefatio*, which seems to point to the fact that they were different from the rest of his oeuvre, which consisted of 'normal' poems.²⁴⁷ Many stories mentioned in the *Dittochaeon* are not referred to in other parts of Prudentius' oeuvre, which marks the specific position of the collection of *tituli* within the poet's work.²⁴⁸

Lehmann has convincingly shown that Prudentius' *tituli* could not be read, by using the (hardly readable) inscriptions in the Santa Sabina as an analogy: given the length of Prudentius' verses and the amount of poems in the *Dittochaeon*, a church with the same size as the Santa Sabina would have been

245 Arnulf (1997) 100–1. He divides the *tituli* in descriptive, narrative and allegorical epigrams (see pp. 70–2), but neither his classifications nor the use of this subdivision for proving the *tituli*'s authenticity are convincing. However, he is right in pointing at the literary aspects of *tituli*.

246 This seems actually the most important reason to assume that the poems in the *ditt.* were used as *tituli*. Other characteristics of the poems (shortness, limited topic) are mainly important as arguments supporting or dismissing the hypothesis based on the indication in the manuscripts. Sometimes this reasoning is turned around, see e.g. Brockhaus (1872) 267.

247 Cf. Damasus who probably never published his epigrams as a book, see Bernt (1968) 56. Id. 72, considers the one title *Dittochaeon* for the 48 *tituli* an argument for "ein werk mit rein literarischer Absicht", but does not mention the fact that it is not mentioned in the *praefatio*. However, the *Psychomachia* is not referred to either in Prudentius' preface.

248 Brockhaus (1872) 235. The *ditt.* also has the most Biblical quotations. Cf. id. 159 about stylistic differences between the *ditt.* and the other poems of Prudentius.

needed to show all *tituli* with accompanying images.²⁴⁹ In that case, however, the *tituli*, if inscribed in readable form, would not fit between two columns and would be much bigger than the images. Clearly, esthetics made such a situation impossible.²⁵⁰ It is not, however, necessary to follow Lehmann's conclusion that the *tituli* were not depicted, since they could have been used as decoration without being readable.

Therefore, it is most reasonable to accept the *tituli* as verse captions that were actually used as such, with the testimonies about the *tituli* by Paulinus as the most important evidence. Prudentius seems to have introduced yet another new genre in Christian poetry.²⁵¹ It is to be hoped for that new evidence will appear in the future and shed more light on the vexed question of the original use of the *tituli*.

Assuming that the *tituli* were functional in a spatial context, the nature of the *tituli* themselves must be further analysed. They were not necessarily indicating what was depicted. Churchgoers were aided in their act of interpretation by the knowledge they had acquired during masses: due to homilies and liturgy they were able to recognise most depictions of Biblical stories.²⁵²

Poetry and the visual arts come together in the *tituli*. In the case of Ambrose and Paulinus, the poets probably were their own commissioners, since their *tituli* were exhibited in churches under their supervision. They might have felt that verses were more appropriate, i.e. more lofty, in a context with depictions of Biblical events. The idea that the *tituli* were directed to God maybe also

249 We cannot exclude the possibility that Prudentius wrote the *tituli* for a church that has never been built, see Smolak (2010) 187.

250 Lehmann (2010), especially 116–21. His final judgement of the *tituli* is found on p. 126: "Er (Prudentius, *rd*) schafft gleichsam vergeistigte Bilder, die der geistlichen Erbauung dienen und zur Meditation anregen sollen und die—ein wichtiger Aspekt—wegen ihre Kürze und Bildhaftigkeit besonders einprägsam sind." Gnilka (2009a) 125 (note 20) assumes that Prudentius' *tituli*, in contrast with those of Ambrosius, were "reine Kunstschöpfungen", "die niemals für die Wand bestimmt waren." He agrees with the objections of Bernt (1968) 70–2 (cf. also Belting-Ihm (1994) 845 without further argument), who cannot imagine some scenes to be depicted (p. 72): "Das dürfte kein Maler, der 48 Bilder aus der Bibel darstellte, in seinen Zyklus aufgenommen haben." Gnilka elsewhere admits (id. 139) that (fictive) epigrams do not necessarily describe what is depicted.

251 Kaesser (2010) emphasises the novelty of the *Dittochaeon* both compared to classical and Christian literature.

252 This religious education compensated for the "doctrinal richness and word-play" of the *tituli*, as emphasised by Green (1971) 41. Brenk (2005) 147–8 and Belting-Ihm (1994) 840 also doubt that the *tituli* were understood by churchgoers. Paulinus is the only poet in late antiquity to provide his audience with quite literal descriptions of what was seen, see Belting-Ihm (1994) 855 and 884.

played a role.²⁵³ Furthermore, the mnemotecnical function of verses might have been important.²⁵⁴

Given their sometimes allegorical nature, the *tituli* were presumably written after the pictures had been made; they do not seem suitable to have instructed painters.²⁵⁵ Paulinus' *tituli* in his *ep.* 32 to Severus, which could be presented as a counter-example, must be seen in their context: the bishop showed his erudition and familiarity with the literary discourse of his time by presenting *tituli* to a friend.²⁵⁶

The goal of a decoration with text and images seems to have been to reach all visitors, uneducated as well as learned. For the uneducated and for those with a limited literacy the images provided an suggestive display of colours, light and shapes in which stories which were well known through homilies and liturgy could be recognised easily.²⁵⁷ The majority of the audience in Christian churches could only partly understand the combined message of image and text. Commissioners as well as the designers of *tituli* and images knew this very well.²⁵⁸ During services, priests could refer to the images (or *tituli*) at hand to enliven their sermons. For the elite, raised within a culture in which texts had a privileged position, the *tituli* were an addition to the decoration of the church, which challenged people to think about aspects depicted or implicated by the images, like allegorical explanations of Biblical stories.²⁵⁹

253 Cf. Brown (2012) 41 about names written on the walls of the synagogue of Dura Europos.

254 Cf. Gnillka (2009b) 81 about Ambrose's *tituli*: "Sie tragen lehrhaften Charakter, und die Kürze der hexametrischen Zweizeiler macht sie erst recht geeignet, gelernt zu werden par coeur." Cf. Aug. *serm.* 319,8, cited *ibid.*, but also Gualandri (1992) 15–24, about orality in late antiquity in general.

255 I agree with Lavarenne (1951) and Pillinger (1980). Charlet (1983) 145—among others—assumes a reversed procedure.

256 Moreover, he might have known Severus' complex through descriptions of his postman Victor. Not all Paulinian *tituli* seem to have been meant to be actually made visible: it is hard to imagine that Paulinus really wanted Severus to use the *titulus* in which Paulinus' own humble status is emphasised, see Bernt (1968) 76–7.

257 See also Duggan (1989) 243–8 about the image as reminder of words.

258 Cf. Pietri (1988) 157: "Ce projet conçu clairement par Paulin de Nole et poursuivi par nombre d'auteurs de tituli était sans doute trop ambitieux pour être pleinement compris de l'ensemble des fidèles. Cependant les textes gravés, même lorsqu'ils demeuraient obscurs ou indéchiffrables, étaient certainement perçus par les plus humbles comme sacrés et contribuaient ainsi à sacraliser le monument."

259 Notermans (2007) 266 considers the *tituli* even to be a means of social differentiation: "De aanwezigheid van tekst alleen al zorgde ervoor dat mensen die niet of niet goed konden lezen hun plaats gewezen werd." She also states that in general it is not useful to study separately texts and images that were shown together (p. 147, about floor mosaics in North

One might also think of the *tituli* as legitimatisation of images: since Paulinus admits that he decorated his church *raro more* (c. 27,544), he might have added *tituli* at least partly to meet the criticism of more iconophobic churchgoers. The use of hexameters (instead of prose) added a proper prestige to the images.²⁶⁰ Paulinus' complex in particular seems to testify for the design of a church as a sort of "Gesamtkunstwerk", in which architecture, verbal and visual decoration amalgamated into one monument, as a permanent expression of the faith and euergetism of the sponsor.²⁶¹

The genre of the *tituli* seems to have been particularly popular in the West. From later periods, captions from the Eastern part of the empire are known, but they consist of Biblical citations rather than 'new' metrical verse compositions.²⁶²

The *tituli* do not provide the key to full comprehension of the nature of the relationship between art and poetry in late antiquity. They probably would have done so, if the images that they accompanied had been preserved. However, even in that case they only concern monumental art, whereas most remaining art originates from a funerary context. The *tituli* do show, however, that the higher clergy in late antiquity was involved in the production of poetry as well as art and that they eagerly combined art and poetry.

4.2.2.2 *Art, Poetry and Prose*

As has been discussed above, Roberts' *The Jeweled Style* stated that the two branches of poetry and art were tight together by shared aesthetics. Moreover, they were connected in late antiquity, since they were often compared to each other. The popularity of *ecphrasis* in late antique poetry confirms the interest of poets in art.

Several characteristics of the jeweled style also seem to be elements of the style of prose literature.²⁶³ Nevertheless, prose was a different cultural category: it was not considered equal to poetry and art.²⁶⁴ The most striking indication of the difference between the three is the fact that Christian prose

Africa). Cf. Van Dael (1999) 130: *tituli* were meant to explain unclear images or to attribute a deeper meaning to them in order to please intellectual churchgoers.

260 See e.g. Belting-Ihm (1994) 843.

261 See Pietri (1988) 151–2.

262 See Belting-Ihm (1994) 864 and 887.

263 See Roberts (1989) 49–50 and 63–4.

264 Cf. e.g. Gnifka (2001b) 213–4. Even recited rhythmic prose was only understood properly by the elite within the small group of privileged people that could read, see id. 220.

existed long before poetry and (figurative) art. The books of the Bible as well as other Christian writings in the first centuries were written in prose and—as far as we know—neither poetry in classical metres nor images were included in their earliest editions. The oldest parts of the New Testament consists of some letters of Paul dating from the middle of the first century, roughly almost two centuries before art and poetry appeared in Christian society.

Prose was more ubiquitous than art and poetry.²⁶⁵ Most communication—in churches as well as among the literate class—was through prose, especially in oral form (e.g. in sermons). Nevertheless, the epigraphic record shows a poetical revival in late antiquity, which indicates the remarkable popularity of verse for mass communication. The distribution of several theological prose-writings notwithstanding, most prose was less likely to be widely distributed than a poem in classical metre.²⁶⁶ Paulinus quoting his *tituli* in letters to aristocratic friends testifies to the function poetry had within aristocratic discourse: it was not used for the primary message, but to embellish a prose text (in itself well polished). With poetry, visual art is used for more than mere practical purposes. Apart from the value they have on their own, as a means of communication both poetry and art add something to plain written text, which is the clearest bearer of information among a literate group of people. Even if it seems necessary to use images to reach an illiterate class, the form by which this is done is not self-evident. Most Christian objects of art show a variety and quality of images that goes beyond the demands of mere communication.

Although prose works could be literature in the highest possible literary style, there was a difference in appreciation for prose and poetry. The poetic form was an obvious and highly respected stylistic feature of a story or idea. A poem was granted higher status than a text in prose, even if the poem was

265 Regarding art and poetry, more separate objects of art remain than different poems. A complete (and therefore merely hypothetical), quantitative comparison of the representation of the apostles in art and poetry should include all objects of art and all manuscripts of early Christian poems (these manuscripts unfortunately do not survive at all for this early period), in order to measure the distribution of an apostle story in both media.

266 Moreover, the fact that exegesis of a particular passage by the same person could differ according to the intended audience, makes sermons less suitable for distribution outside the place of origin, see Pollmann (2008) for the case of Augustine and the book of Genesis. Occasionally, sermons were shared: Gori (2005). The audience of homilies was probably mixed, see Carrié (2001) 45 and Perrin (2001) 196 (note 114), *pace* MacMullen (1989). Rousseau (1998) underlines the elitist character of the sermons that survived antiquity. The influence of the many theological treatises was also restricted, see Engemann (1997) 24.

characterised by a content taken from prose literature (like much of early Christian poetry). Christian prose literature was generally felt to be of low literary quality, especially that of the Bible.²⁶⁷ The New Testament is one of the best known testimonies of this phenomenon. A discussion about the 'low style' of the Biblical writings, the *sermo piscatorius* or Latin of fishermen (referring to the Latin translations) arose already in the first period of Christianity.

Moreover, the classical educational system privileged poetry, especially the epics of Homer and Vergil, which were considered apogees of Greek and Latin literature. Any author writing in imitation of these poets claimed a position in a literary tradition of incomparable stylistic quality and learning. It is of course no coincidence that the first well-known Christian poets Juvenius and Proba followed in Vergil's footsteps, by writing hexameters.²⁶⁸ In conclusion: "There can be little doubt that poetry was more attractive than prose to most late antique men of culture."²⁶⁹ People from illiterate classes might not have been able to enjoy all literary features of poetry, but they undoubtedly noticed the metre and considered it to be a sign of learning and erudition.

Painters, sculptors and poets had to modify the narratives that were present in oral and textual (prose-) traditions, either through visualisation or by adapting the language and moulding it into the classical metre.²⁷⁰ But there is more in an image or a poem than the constitutive elements of the story it refers to:²⁷¹ details in depiction and description can give a peculiar meaning to the scene or passage. Here is a possibility of reciprocal influence of art and poetry.

4.2.2.3 *The Approach of Early Christian Poetry*

Since no study of the apostles' representation in early Christian Greek and Latin poetry has been undertaken so far, it was necessary to first gather the passages mentioning the apostles. The *Poetria Nova* database, containing all Latin poetry from antiquity to the Middle Ages, was of great use.²⁷² Main

267 See e.g. Jerome's *ep.* 22,30 or Augustine's *conf.* 12,27. Cf. e.g. Auerbach (1958) 38–43.

268 Cf. the *praefatio* of Juvenius' epic, referring directly to Homer and Vergil in *praef.* 9–10. About late antique culture and the large role of literature and poetry see e.g. Gualandri (1992), pp. 31–2 in particular.

269 Cameron (2011) 350.

270 Cf. Gnllka (2001a) 136 about Prudentius' *Cathemerinon*, which could not possibly have been written in prose: "Der Gebrauch von Bildern und Metaphern ist ihr (sc. der antiken Dichtersprache, rd) eigen: im Gegensatz zum Prosaiker, zum Redner oder Philosophen etwa, darf der Dichter sich in dieser Hinsicht große Freiheit erlauben (...)."

271 For the term 'constitutive elements', see Hvalvik (2006) 406.

272 Mastandrea and Tessarolo (2001). The database was used via the website <www.musisdeoque.com> (now <www.mqdq.it>).

search entries were the words *apostolus*, *discipulus* and the names of the apostles, using different possible spellings. Greek poetry has been searched via the TLG on the words ἀπόστολος and μαθητής and the names of the individual apostles.²⁷³ Proba could not mention the apostles by name, since their names cannot be found in Vergil's oeuvre. In this case a careful reading of her poem has revealed which terms she used. The oeuvre of several other poets—e.g. Juvenecus, Ambrose and Amphilocheus—has also been read in its entirety to check if the search terms mentioned above were adequate. Modern literature was of course also used, but did hardly reveal any passage that was not found via the search terms.²⁷⁴

Of course, the apostles were also (in Latin as well as in Greek literature) designated by less explicit terms than the words mentioned above. I have chosen to focus on the names and words I mentioned, since it is improbable that many references could be found that clearly point to the apostles, but do not have these words or names in their immediate context.²⁷⁵ The contexts of the search terms are discussed through a running commentary particularly focusing on narrative elements in the texts. In this way, it is likely that (nearly) all passages about the apostles are covered. The present corpus includes most of the important Christian poets of the fourth century and includes hundreds of references to the apostles, which ensures a representative selection.

Poetry is defined as texts written in quantitative verses, following the classical conception of poetry. This kind of poetry was deliberately placed in the classical poetical tradition. Although Commodianus and Gregory in particular have been criticised for their use of the metre, (not always meeting traditional standards), they clearly intended to follow this tradition and are therefore included.²⁷⁶ Most liturgical texts, which are based on a word accent, are not included in the investigation for the same reason: here, the classical tradition was not particularly important. I also exclude the analysis of (metrical) inscriptions, since to include these would open a whole new area of research and these inscriptions probably did not circulate as literary pieces on their own.

273 The choice of these search terms has been checked afterwards by using as search terms words indicating the apostles that were found during my research (*doctor*, *dux*, *magister*, *princeps*, *vicarius*, cf. also the terms for Peter mentioned in Pietri (1976) 1459–66). This verification did not result in the discovery of new apostle passages.

274 Particularly useful was the index of Biblical stories in the enormous oeuvre of Gregory of Nazianzus provided by Demoen (1996) 327–458.

275 For the words used in antiquity to designate the apostles see e.g. RAC 19,300–2 s.v. Jünger (Kany). But designations are often confused already in the first period after the circulation of the New Testament writings, see id. 311.

276 Cf. 1.1 and 1.9.

By contrast, the *tituli* of Ambrose, Prudentius and Paulinus and the poems of Damasus were copied and included in manuscripts of literary works in an early stage and are therefore examined. Furthermore, they were all shown in (martyr) churches and catacombs. Their function and original location could form a bridge between the analysis of poetry and the visual arts.

The approach of the poetical data is essentially based on close reading. A scrupulous reading of the texts and comparisons of its passages on the apostles with other material provides meaningful information about the way in which the apostles were represented in early Christian poetry. The important place of the Bible in early Christian culture and the presumably widespread presence of other traditions about the apostles' lives make them a likely source for the material in poetry. As a consequence, the readers of this poetry probably had expectations about what they would find. The narrator of the poems could break the horizon of expectations of readers (or listeners), which was essentially based on the Biblical account, by the omission or addition of information where his audience did not expect it. Details omitted with regards to generally accepted knowledge about the apostles (especially the information found in the New Testament) are thus as important as the details that are mentioned ('invented' or in conformity with general knowledge).²⁷⁷ In order to reveal possible developments within the representation of the apostles in poetry, the poets who mention them are discussed in chronological order. Each author is briefly introduced in order to explain the context of his or her work. This is part one of the book. The results of the entire investigation are used for the analysis of art and poetry together in part two.

4.2.2.4 *The Approach of Early Christian Art*

A general problem of the study of early Christian art is that we do not know what proportion of the once existing corpus of art from the early Christian period we still possess. It has been estimated that between 300,000 and 750,000 sarcophagi were produced in the Roman Empire in the second and third century only. Apart from the criticism such estimations naturally arouse, the extremely wide range of numbers already shows its limited value. Moreover, we do not know which part of the sarcophagi was decorated.²⁷⁸ There is, however, a considerable drop down of sarcophagus production from Christian times onwards, which results in a much smaller amount of sarcophagi with

277 Cf. Hamon (1984) 11: "C'est l'absence qui est (qui signale) l'idéologie." On p. 15 Hamon points to 'absence' as a stylistic device.

278 See Russell (2011) 127.

Christian imagery compared to pagan production.²⁷⁹ But even then the fact remains that we have only very little of what once was the early Christian cultural production.

However, the number of remaining objects is still considerable. The apostles were depicted from the very beginnings of Christian art onwards. The original context in which the objects were used is often obscure. Therefore, it is difficult to obtain a nuanced view on all aspects of the representation of the apostles. Fortunately, the growing interest in late antiquity has also resulted in an increasing interest in early Christian art and in several great exhibitions that gathered an impressive amount of material. Even more useful are some extensive repertoria of catacomb paintings and sarcophagi.

The work of Arnold Provoost (2011a, b and c) has been taken as a starting point of the present research towards the apostolic presence in early Christian art, both because of its detailed quantitative analysis of the material and its large amount of images included.²⁸⁰ Provoost included 2358 sarcophagi from the entire Western world and 454 fresco ensembles in his *repertorium*. The frescoes are from the Roman catacombs. The recent date of Provoost's publication made it possible to include recent finds. His corpus includes a highly representative and impressive amount of material. Other publications were used to complement his material, including major catalogues and repertories such as the *Index of Christian Art*.²⁸¹

279 Koch (2000) 216–8, p. 216 in particular, mentioning 2,500 remaining Christian (fragments of) sarcophagi in the period 270–600 (compared to 12,000–15,000 non Christian (fragments of) sarcophagi in the period 110–310).

280 Provoost also kindly provided an updated and improved version of his work in the summer of 2014. It will be published online soon, as prof. Provoost pointed out to me. Provoost improved the *repertorium* of catacomb paintings by Nestori, see Provoost (2011a) 8–9.

281 E.g. Koch (2000) and Kollwitz (1941) for Eastern sarcophagi. Paintings from Thessalonica are discussed in Dresken-Weiland (2010). Cf. also other catalogues, e.g. Effenberger and Severin (1992) no. 30–1 and 48. Both sarcophagi and catacomb paintings from outside Rome are scarce for the period until 400. I consulted the copy of the *Index of Christian Art* available at the Utrecht University library and the digital database. However, the *repertoria* of early Christian sarcophagi were the main sources besides Provoost. Three volumes of *repertoria* have been published so far: Deichmann (1967), Dresken-Weiland (1998) and Christern-Briesenick (2003). Testini (1969) and Buschhausen (1971)—with corrections in Kalinowski (2011)—offer catalogues of objects other than sarcophagi. Other major general catalogues are e.g. Utro (2009), Spier (2007), Stutzinger, Bergmann et al. (1983) and Weitzmann (1979).

Since early Christian art has received considerable scholarly attention, a comparison of the representation of the apostles in art with that in poetry can start from existing literature and existing collections of material. Part two of this book therefore aims at bringing together the sometimes scattered knowledge about the presence of the apostles in art. Although the interpretation of most scenes in which the apostles are represented is agreed upon, several scenes evidently need more ample discussion. The amount of material necessarily limits the possibilities of extensive discussion of all singular objects. Some remarkable cases are discussed, but the large picture is most important, in order to compare the themes of early Christian art with that in poetry.

4.2.2.5 *Bringing Art and Poetry Together: Comparing the Use of Apostle Narratives*

At first glance, a comparison of the description of the apostles in poetry with the way they are depicted in art is a logical starting point. However, no description of the outer appearance of the apostles is found in poetry. Moreover, in art only Peter and Paul can be distinguished from the other apostles before the year 400. Therefore, subject matter is a more fruitful point of comparison.

The emphasis in the present study is on apostle narratives, rather than other references to the apostles (e.g. Matthew as writer of the gospel attributed to him). However, the latter are also included in order to provide a nuanced view on the representation of the apostles. Narratives are suitable to the transposition of content from one medium into another.²⁸² Stories bear a core of meaning that is in most cases embedded in a multitude of connotations and interpretations. Some essential parts of a story are more or less equal in different media; otherwise the story would not be recognisable. Any elements added to this basic story are also related to these essential constituents and reveal (parts of) the meaning of the story as a whole. The stories are not necessarily referred to in detail: one image or sentence (or word) can evoke an entire (existing) story.²⁸³ Even if new stories are created in these media, they always

282 "Narrative is usually defined as a succession of events but another important feature of narrative texts is that some or all of the events are described as they take place within a particular context. As a result, these events are 'brought to life' for the reader, being 'acted out' rather than presented in summary form.", see Emmott (1997) 236.

283 Cf. the discussion by Demoen (1996) 24–9: he distinguishes between histories and stories "in which these histories are told". Demoen focuses on *exempla*, which makes this specific distinction particularly relevant for his research. Nevertheless, I work with the same idea in mind.

refer to existing stories, since this study investigates references to the apostles, who were known from the Biblical narrative.

The human capacity of understanding and memorising stories makes storytelling an effective way to spread a message.²⁸⁴ The selection of stories to be applied in art and poetry therefore plays an important role in the creation of memory and representation.²⁸⁵ This selection—which is necessarily made in the production process of every form of representation—can be from existing stories (oral or written), but can also consist of stories invented by those who decide what is selected. Most probably, a selection consists of both types of existing and newly invented stories, but needs at least some stories referring to existing ideas and narratives in order to be accepted by the audience. Newly invented stories lack the authority of older narratives that have become part of a long tradition (which was particularly important in antiquity) and are therefore less probable to arise in a context in which stories have an important social, political, cultural or religious position.

Thus, the Biblical canon plays an important role in the selection of apostle stories.²⁸⁶ Biblical texts provided the lion's share of inspiration for underlying ideas in Christian art and poetry. The representation of the apostles in the Bible functions as a starting point for the attempt to reveal connections between art and poetry and between artists and poets. All aspects of the poetical and visual apostle which are not found in the Bible are extra-canonical and potentially (though certainly not necessarily) offending for people favouring the canon, which was connected to the mainstream church in late antiquity. The focus is on the differences and similarities between the poetical and visual apostle, for which the representation of the apostles in other literary sources is an indispensable foil.

The *tituli* of Ambrose, Prudentius and Paulinus of Nola form a bridge between art and poetry: the themes and stories that are described in the *tituli* certainly point to themes deemed apt to depict, even if the verses of the *tituli* should not be considered to describe exactly what was depicted. They offer useful insights into the possible variety within early Christian art, which might have been partly faded away by the vicissitudes of time.

In part one of this book the 'poetical' apostle is analysed. It is the aim of the analysis of poetry to explain differences and similarities between the

284 For the eagerness of the human mind to use stories to construct meaning see e.g. Green, Strange et al. (2002).

285 See e.g. Erll (2005) 144–5, discussing memory and literature: the concept is also applicable to art.

286 Cf. Assmann (2005) 103–29.

representation of the apostles in other literary sources and in early Christian poetry. In part two, the 'visual' apostle is analysed via the visual sources. Again, discerning deviations from and additions to existing Biblical and apocryphal stories is the main focus of the analysis. The visual apostle is then compared to the poetic apostle for each story that is used in both types of apostolic representation. In order to make the comparison between art and text more direct, the focus is on representations of the apostles that can be related to stories about the apostles, rather than on symbolical representations. In a final stage (the general conclusion), the results from the comparison between the poetic and visual apostle are discussed, including possible differences in the choice of stories used in both media. The main question to be answered is how the depiction of the apostles in the visual arts was related to that in poetry and how differences and similarities in representation are to be explained.

This investigation of the representation of the apostles in poetry and art is hoped to contribute to a better comprehension of the way in which the apostles were perceived in the Christian cultural community in the third and fourth century and how the memory of the apostles in late antique society was constructed. It also sheds new light on the extent of mutual contact between poets and artists. Several years ago, Averil Cameron complained: "Art historians of the period (*sc.* late antiquity) are highly involved with texts, using texts to explicate visual material, and constantly debating the relation of text and image; but are literary historians equally aware of images and visual art?"²⁸⁷ In this study I try to meet this concern, by investigating the relationship between art and poetry in late antiquity, starting from a philological perspective.

287 Cameron (2006) 19, in the same vein Cameron (2005) 1.

Early Christian Poets and the Apostles

The first part of this book presents the representation of the apostles as it is found in the work of all Greek and Latin poets working in the third and fourth century. In order to reveal trends and developments and because most poets can be relatively securely dated, the authors and their work are presented in chronological order. Each author is briefly introduced: the outlines of his biography are provided and his oeuvre is discussed. Questions concerning dating, audience and performance situation are also included in this introductory part.

After this introduction, the actual representation of the apostles follows. A discussion of the representation of the group of the twelve apostles precedes a discussion of the representation of the individual apostles in order of diminishing frequency of appearance in the work of each author. Some concluding remarks close each section. Part 1.13 is a synthesis of the results from sections 1.1 to 1.12.

1.1 Commodianus

Since the controversy about the date of the Latin poet Commodianus seems to be settled nowadays, it can safely be assumed that he was the first Latin Christian poet whose work we still have.¹ He probably wrote in the middle of the third century.² Direct historical references are problematic and barely found in his oeuvre. Arguments for the dating are Commodianus' polemic against pagans and Jews and his mentioning of persecutions of Christians by the senate and the Jews: it would be anachronistic to encounter these in a work after the third century.³ A positive depiction of the Goths as is given by

1 Cf. Poinssotte (2005) for an overview of false notions about Commodianus published over the years, including the hypothesis of a dating in the fifth century proposed by Brewer in 1906. See also Thraede (1959) 90 (note 7). Doubts about Commodianus' third century date remain, see e.g. Tränkle (2008) 17 (note 34). For references to Christian poets before Commodianus, see Mazzarino (1989) 100 (note 205).

2 The year 240 seems to be the *terminus post quem*, see Thraede (1959) 111; 312 is *terminus ante quem*, see Martin (1960) 13. Cf. Poinssotte (1996) 272.

3 For the persecutions see *Instr.* 2,5–9 or more specifically 2,2,4; 3,14; 17,14; 18,1 and 21,7, mentioned by Martin (1960), xiii. Persecution by pagan Romans and Jews could also be an

Commodianus would also surprise after the sack of Rome in 410. Moreover, Commodianus mentions that they crossed the Danube (C. 810), as they actually did in the middle of the third century.⁴ Only two texts from antiquity mention Commodianus: The *Viri illustres* (15,1) of Gennadius (450–500), who seems to have read only a small part of the *Instructiones*, and the *Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis* (Commodianus' work is mentioned with the apocrypha).⁵

Commodianus' oeuvre consists of two works: the *Instructiones*, a collection of 80 acrostic poems (including one abecedarium) divided in two books, and the *Carmen apologeticum* or *Carmen de duobus populis*, a poem of 1060 hexameters with apocalyptic and eschatological tendencies. It strongly criticises Jews and heathens.⁶ Book one of the *Instructiones* is also directed against Jews and pagans, whereas book two provides rules of life for Christians.⁷ Commodianus has a peculiar Latin style.⁸ Commodianus' use of metre has been much discussed. The *Carmen apologeticum* accords more to general metrical rules than the *Instructiones*, but both are deficient. The didactic content of Commodianus' verses might have interested the author more than metrical accuracy, since even in the present form his verses are recognised as (referring to) hexameters. For Commodianus' audience this might have been enough to attribute the status of a hexametrical work to the poems. Moreover, Commodianus was the first to use a classical metre for the Christian cause, which might at least partly explain his struggle with the metre.⁹

allusion to the condemnation of Christ. Commodianus' use of Latin also favours an early dating, cf. Hoppenbrouwers (1964), esp. 71–2; 85; 88.

- 4 See Martin (1960) xii for the reliability of events mentioned by Commodianus: "Harum rerum descriptionis quamquam haud pauca ex Ioannis apocalypsi et apocryphis hausta sunt, alia tamen poeta addidit ex eis quae ipse uiderat uel is quem sequitur: persecutionem finitam uel interruptam per Gotos paganos, partem quam agunt senatus et Iudaei, persecutionem sanguinolentam."
- 5 Martin (1960) v–vii argues that Gennadius read just the first book of the *Instructiones*. Thraede (1961) 116 (note 16) states that Gennadius has not read Commodianus' oeuvre (or only the first and last *instructio*). He remarks that there is no basis for some of Gennadius' statements in Commodianus' text. It cannot be excluded, however, that Gennadius derived his knowledge about Commodianus from another source, unknown nowadays.
- 6 For Commodianus' negative remarks about the Jews, cf. Schreckenberg (1979) 82–94.
- 7 See Poinssotte (2009) xxiii.
- 8 Cf. Fontaine (1981) 40 speaking of "les rythmes rocailleux, haletants, laborieux du poète Commodien." Nevertheless, Commodianus knew and imitated classical poets, especially Vergil and Ovid. Due to similar purposes of the two works, many similarities can be seen between the *Disticha Catonis* and the *Instructiones* of Commodianus, see Opelt (1988) 138–47.
- 9 Raby (1953) 14 argues that Commodianus' poetry has a word accent, but concludes that the verses "cannot (...) be said to have any definite rhythm at all." Mönnich (1990) 51 suggests

The name Commodianus is found in the acrostic of *Instr.* 2,35: *Commodianus mendicus Christi*. Commodianus, who maybe had a Semitic background, probably wrote his works in Africa, given his use of the African Bible and the works of Cyprian (see especially 2 *Instr.*).¹⁰ Commodianus might not have been born as a Christian: he states to have been a pagan in *C.* 1–14 (cf. also *C.* 3 and *Instr.* 1,1 esp. 4–5).¹¹

Apparently, Commodianus had some connection to the Church, since he devotes many poems to the clergy (*Instr.* 2,22; 23; 24; 30; 33). The edifying character of Commodianus' works suggests that he was a church worker or had another pastoral function.¹² Maybe the choice for acrostic poems and abecedaria can likewise be explained by didactic purposes: these forms made it easier to learn the poems (and their Christian content) by heart.¹³ Another explanation for this peculiarity could be Semitic influences.¹⁴

that the poor metrical quality in the *Instructiones* is due to the bad manuscript tradition, since the *Carmen* of the same author shows a better grasp of metrics. I would argue that this difference in metre could more logically be explained by a earlier date of the *Instructiones*. Later on, Commodianus might have become more experienced in writing poetry. Poinssotte (2009) xii–iii suggests that Commodianus' 'failure' in the metre was deliberate: "Il aurait été tout à fait capable de composer des hexamètres parfaitement corrects. Mais c'eût été transiger trop ostensiblement avec des valeurs 'séculières' qu'il dénonçait." (p. xii.). However, if Commodianus did not want to use a metre which was contaminated by pagan use, he would not have used it at all, see Dijkstra (2009b). Cf. Cameron (2004) 338–9 for the neglect of metre in other (later) Christian authors, notably Gregory of Nazianzus (p. 339, note 71, refers to Latin authors).

- 10 Commodianus has therefore been referred to as "the wild bard of Christian Africa": Stella (2007) 39. See Poinssotte (1996) 275–6 about Commodianus' region of origin. Thraede (1959) 94 denies Commodianus' use of Cyprian.
- 11 Thraede (1961) 116 is sceptic about biographical elements in Commodianus' poetry, considering them literary *topoi*.
- 12 Cf. Salvatore (1977) 124 who speaks about the "carattere didascalico" of the *Instructiones*. One manuscript claims that Commodianus was a bishop, but this cannot be confirmed by other evidence, see Döpp & Geerlings (2002) s.v. Commodianus.
- 13 Raby (1953) 13. For the didactic aspect of poetry (easier to memorise than prose) cf. also the often cited statement of the fifth century writer Sedulius in his *Epistula ad Macedonium*: *quod autem uersuum uiderint blandimento mellitum, tanta cordis auditate suscipiunt, ut in alta memoria saepius haec iterando constituent et reponant*. The argument is already found in earlier authors, see Arist. *Rh.* 3,1409b, Sen. *Ep.* 108,11 and Lact. *Inst.* 5,1,10.
- 14 Commodianus might have been influenced by Christian hymns, which had underwent Semitic influences before, cf. Ferguson, McHugh et al. (1997) 550. But education in a Semitic environment seems to be the most obvious reason, cf. Poinssotte (1996). The abecedarian form was also known from the Old Testament (e.g. Psalm 119). Poinssotte (2009) xxxvi suggests that the acrostics are meant to indicate the character (title) of the work rather than helping people to memorise the poems. Learning poems about the

1.1.1 *The Apostles in Commodianus' Poetry*

Commodianus mentions the apostles only four times in his *Instructiones*. In his other work, the *Carmen apologeticum*, ten references to the apostles can be found. Most references are to Paul, but Peter and Thomas are also mentioned, and a few times the apostles as a group.¹⁵ The apostles are thus scarcely represented in Commodianus' poetry.

In *Instr.* 1,31,9 (with the acrostic *Iudicibus*), Commodianus cites Paul first (Phil 3,19), and then calls him by name: *Vobis autem Deus est uenter et praemia iura. / Suggestit hoc Paulus apostolus, non ego pulex* (*Instr.* 1,31,8–9). 'Your God is your belly and profits are your laws.' This added Paul the apostle, not me, a flea.¹⁶ Paul is described as far superior to the poet.¹⁷ The poem as a whole is primarily based on the Proverbs of Solomon, which suggested to the readers that Paul was a wise man (just as Solomon).

Three passages contain a similar designation of the apostles; *Instr.* 2,13,13, 2,15,2 and 2,24,2. A citation of or reference to Paul is preceded by a phrase naming him or simply calling him *apostolus*. In *Instr.* 2,15,2 the only explicit judgement about Paul can be found: he is *beatus*.¹⁸ *Instr.* 2,13 emphasises that God himself speaks through the apostle: *Apostolus clamat, <clamat> immo Deus per illum* (*Instr.* 2,13,13: 'The apostle cries out, or rather God cries out through him'). The poem is addressed to Christians in general, poem 1,31 to judges, 2,15 to women and 2,24 to leading men in Church. Commodianus considers apostles (or at least Paul) to be authoritative to speak to people of various classes, which seems a logical consequence of his opinion about their divine inspiration (*Instr.* 2,13,13).

faults of pagan Gods (book 1 of the *Instructiones*) by heart would not have been a logical purpose for a Christian poet, id. xxxvii. However, memorising the weaknesses of the pagan enemy, especially in times of persecution, seems useful.

15 Paul: C. 627; 828; *Instr.* 1,31,9; 2,15,2; 2,13,13; 2,24,2. Peter: C. 550; 626; 828. Thomas: C. 561 (and 555, referred to as *unus*). All apostles: C. 549; 553; 555; 571–4.

16 Text of the *Instructiones*: Poinssotte (2009). Translations of Commodianus are my own, unless stated otherwise. For parallels see Poinssotte (2009) 254–5.

17 Commodianus is also very modest in other poems of the *Instructiones*, e.g. in 2,16,1: *Iustus non sum, fratres, de cloaca leuatus* (cf. Ps 113,7) and in the acrostich of *Instr.* 2,35 mentioned above. This humiliation seems to be part of Commodianus' *Unfähigkeitstopik* discussed by Thraede (1962) 125–8. In spite of Commodianus' reverence for Paul, the poet does not necessarily accept all of his theology: the poet is much more critical about the Jews than the apostle, see Schreckenber (1979) 93–4.

18 In 2,15,2 a Christian woman is addressed: the explicit mentioning of Paul here recalls the particular attraction that the apostle had for Christian women according to apocryphal stories, e.g. the *Acta Pauli et Theclae*.

The apostles as a group only occur in a passage in the *Carmen Apologeticum* where Commodianus criticises the Jews. Two of them are singled out, in conformity with the Biblical account: Peter and Thomas. Commodianus discusses Jesus' predicting Peter's denial (cf. Matt 26.31–5) and his own death and Resurrection (cf. Matt 17.22–3) to his apostles. He also recounts his visit to the apostles after the Resurrection, first without Thomas and then in his presence (John 20.19; 24–9):

Prædixerat autem discipulis cuncta de sese,
 550 qualiter a populo pateretur Petro negante;
 et quia de tumulis resurgeret tertio die,
 dixerat et ipsud, et compleuit omnia dicta.
 At ubi surrexit, uenit ad apostolos ipse
 et stetit illis in medio: 'Pax uobis', inquit.
 555 Inter quos discipulos non adfuit unus orantes;
 cui cum referrent, discredere coepit et addit:
 'Si prius non digitum misero, ubi clauī fuerunt
 aut ubi percussus de lancea, non ego credo.'
 Tunc die Dominica rursus remeauit ad illos
 560 et stetit illis in medio: 'Pax uobis', inquit.
 Et statim adgreditur Thomam incredulum illum:
 'Accede propius et contange corpus ut ante.'¹⁹

And he had foresaid everything about himself to his disciples, how he would suffer through the people, while Peter denied him, and that he would rise from his grave on the third day, he had said it himself and he fulfilled all his words. And when he had risen, he himself went to his apostles and stood in the middle of them: "Peace be with you", he said. Among the praying apostles, one was not there: and he did not believe it when they told it to him and said "I will not believe it, before I have (put) my finger where the nails were (hammered) in this unfortunate man or where he was pierced by the lance." Then, on the day of the Lord, he came to them again and stood in the middle of them: "Peace be with you", he said. And he immediately went to disbelieving Thomas: "Come up to me and touch my body as you did before."

The apostles are depicted in an impartial way in vv. 549 and 553. The terms *apostoli* and *discipuli* are both used, apparently without distinction. In v. 549, the description contrasts with the emphasis on Peter's denial of Christ (v. 550). Moreover, Commodianus puts him on a par with the Jewish people who do

19 C. 549–62. Text C.: Martin (1960).

not believe him and will even condemn him. In v. 555 the apostles are praying (*orantes*) and are thus portrayed in contrast to a doubting disciple, who is not introduced before line 561: Thomas, the doubting one (*incredulum*, v. 561). A glimpse of sympathy for the disbelieving apostle may be seen in the addition of *misero* (v. 557) to the Biblical text (John 20.24–9), by which Commodianus shows Thomas' compassion with Christ. *Ut ante* in v. 562 shows Commodianus' view on the story: this remark is not found in the Biblical text, but confirms Jesus' corporeality, which was an important issue in early Christian theological debate.²⁰ After this passage, Commodianus adds four verses (C. 571–4) in which the last forty days of Christ on earth are described. The role of the apostles is emphasised:

Quadraginta dies cum illis ex ordine fecit,
edocuit illis multa, quae saeculo uenirent.
Post cuius ascensum miracula multa fecerunt,
de uerbo curabant infirmos in nomine Christi.

Forty consecutive days he has passed with them, he taught them a lot of things that would happen on earth. After his ascension, they have performed many miracles: according to the Word, they healed the sick in the name of Christ.

The passage refers to the book of Acts of the apostles: after Christ's ascension (v. 573, cf. Acts 1.3), the apostles continued to heal people in his name (vv. 573–4, cf. e.g. Acts 2.43). Maybe Commodianus also thought of the traditions of the apocryphal acts of the apostles, in which the apostles are portrayed as miracle workers.

Commodianus mentions three apocryphal traditions concerning Peter and Paul. The most remarkable ones are found in the C: after a discourse about the idleness of worldly matters and works, Commodianus discusses the similarity of Father and Son and provides some examples of God's eternal power (C. 623–30):

(...) Et Deus est, hominem totidemque se fecit,
et quidquid ualuerit, faciet, ut muta loquantur.
625 Balaam caedenti asinam suam colloqui fecit
et canem, ut Simoni diceret: 'Clamaris a Petro!'
Paulo praedicanti discerent ut multi de illo
leonem populo fecit loqui uoce diuina.

20 For the implications see Most (2005) 3–154, pp. 141–5 in particular.

Deinde, quod ipsa non patitur nostra natura,
 630 infantem fecit quinto mense proloqui uulgo.

And he is God, and he has made himself a man as well,²¹ and he will perform what he is capable of, so that (even) the mutes speak. He let a donkey speak, to Balaam when he fell, and a dog, so that he said to Simon: "You are called by Peter!" To Paul preaching, so that many learned from him, he made a lion speak with a divine voice. Thereafter, although our own human nature does not allow that, he let a five month old child speak to the people.

After a reference to the speaking ass in the Biblical story of Balaam (Num 22.21–35), Commodianus mentions other speaking animals: a dog that spoke to Peter (v. 626) and a lion that spoke to Paul (v. 628). The miracles that Commodianus recounts are taken from the Acts of Peter (cf. *Acta Petri* 9 and 15 for the dog and the baby mentioned in C. 630) and the Acts of Paul (cf. *Acta Pauli* 6 for the lion).²² These stories are not very common.²³ Apocryphal traditions and orthodox Scriptures are thus both used by Commodianus, which reflects the situation of the Christian Church in the third century, which was still shaping its dogmas. The canon was not yet firmly established. On the other hand, Commodianus refers to *secreta* he read (C. 936).²⁴ Peter is indicated by his two names Simon and Peter in v. 626, maybe in order to show the transition from a Jewish (Balaam) to a Christian example (Peter). Paul's service to Christ is emphasised by the verb *praedicanti*.

In the last part of the poem, Commodianus describes the end of times, refering frequently to the book of Revelations. He predicts an invasion of the Goths, and also mentions the former Roman emperor Nero (C. 827–8): *Dicimus*

21 *Totidemque* seems to have been taken over from classical authors like Vergil and others, without being properly understood by Commodianus. In *Instr.* 1,25,6 *totidemque* is used in the same way as here.

22 However, it cannot be decided if Commodianus knew the whole *Acta Petri* and *Acta Pauli*, see Schneemelcher (1999^{6c}) 245; cf. id. 197. Ferreiro (2005) 158 (note 29) criticises Schneemelcher for assuming that Commodianus knew only part of the apocryphal Petrine tradition, but ignores the possibility of oral sources for Commodianus.

23 The story about the dog, for example, is "extremely rare in Early Christian art", but occurs several times on sarcophagi at the end of the fourth century, see e.g. Ostrowski (1983) 306 and 2.2.2.2.3. Cf. Ferreiro (2005) 157–8: of all Church Fathers, only John Malalas and Commodianus mention the story.

24 Thraede (1961) 118 (note 31) argues that Commodianus refers to his use of Apocrypha in C. 936. *Instr.* 1,33,7 has been said to show the influence of the Acts of Thomas, see Poinssotte (2009) 261.

*hunc autem Neronem esse uetustum, / qui Petrum et Paulum prius puniuit in urbem.*²⁵ Apparently, Commodianus considers the condemnation of Peter and Paul to be the most important outrage of Nero—their conviction is the only act of Nero he mentions in this passage—which emphasises the significance he attaches to them.²⁶ The deaths of Peter and Paul in Rome were part of an apocryphal tradition, but so well known that knowledge of a particular apocryphal text cannot be deduced from this short reference.

1.1.2 *Concluding Remarks*

Commodianus only occasionally mentions the apostles in his oeuvre and only three of them are called by name: Peter, Paul and Thomas. The twelve apostles are mentioned in a undeniably positive context from the book of Acts of the apostles.

Paul is often cited as an authority because of his New Testament writings. Peter and Thomas, by contrast, are referred to as examples of the failure of the human nature to believe. Especially the story of the denial was popular in early Christianity, particularly in art (see 2.1.3.1.1), but Commodianus emphasises Peter's fault more than was usually done, since he places the apostle on a par with the doubting Jewish people. The cult for Peter was not as firmly established in the middle of the third century as it was in later times, but the martyrdom of Peter and Paul in Rome is mentioned. The lack of details is remarkable, since Commodianus clearly was aware of apocryphal writings and he lived in a time of persecution. He uses two other apocryphal traditions, without distinguishing them from references to Biblical texts: the story of a dog talking to Peter (C 630, cf. *Acta Petri* 9) and a lion to Paul (C 627–8, cf. *Acta Pauli* 6).

25 'We say that this one was Nero of old, who once punished Peter and Paul in the city.' I doubt whether vv. 856–8 also contain a reference to Peter and Paul, as is stated by Eastman (2013) following others, with as main part *rapit ab oriente prophetas* (v. 856). Given the context, Commodianus seems to refer to Old Testament prophets here. Eastman does not mention vv. 827–8.

26 Cf. Schubert (1998) 382–8 about Nero in Commodianus, p. 386 about the identification of Nero with the antichrist, which is rejected by Schubert, C. 933 notwithstanding (*Nobis Nero factus Antichristus, ille Iudaeis*): "Vielmehr gehört er, wenn seiner Gestalt und seinen Taten auch breiter Raum gewidmet wird, in die Reihe der Vorzeichen des Jüngsten Gerichts (...)."

1.2 Juvencus

Gaius Vettius Aquilinus Juvencus was the first Christian writer of a considerable oeuvre in the traditional (pagan) tradition.²⁷ Nearly all the information that we have about his life and career can be found in Jerome's *De uiris illustribus* 84: he was a Spanish presbyter from noble birth and lived under Constantine.²⁸

The only work of Juvencus that is extant is the *Euangeliorum libri quattuor*, a versification of the gospel of Matthew, with additions based on the Gospel of John and the other synoptics.²⁹ It is the first Biblical epic, starting a long-lasting literary tradition.³⁰ The *evang.* were written or published around the year 329,

27 Forerunners include Commodianus (see 1.1), the anonymous author of the poem *De laudibus Dei* and Lactantius (*De ave Phoenice*). For a history of Christian Latin poetry see e.g. Fontaine (1981), Thraede (1961) and Thraede (1962), Van der Nat (1963) and Zannoni (1958).

28 *Iuencus, nobilissimi generis Hispanus, presbyter, quattuor evangelia hexametris versibus paene ad verbum transferens quattuor libros composuit et nonnulla eodem metro ad sacramentorum ordinem pertinentia. Floruit sub Constantino principe.* Text: Bernoulli (1968) 45. Juvencus seems to have come from Eliberri, the modern Elvira near Granada, see Fontaine (1981) 71. All the contemporary testimonies about Juvencus can be found in the oeuvre of Jerome (*Chron. ad 329 p. Chr., ep. 70,5* and *In Mattheum* 2,11), see Herzog and Divjak (1989) 331–336 (p. 332 for the *testimonia*).

29 Several authors provide an overview of verses in Juvencus and their corresponding Biblical passages, e.g. Hansson (1950) 18. In my analysis of Juvencus' work I mostly refer to the corresponding passages in the Gospel of Matthew only. Unfortunately, a modern complete edition of Juvencus is still absent, in spite of its announcement several years ago: Colombi (2000). For the text of book one and four I use the CSEL edition by Huemer (1891), adapted after Hansson (1950). For a discussion of the so-called "Plusverse" and a critical examination of the work of Hansson (among others), see Gnllka (2007a), pp. 235–40 in particular. One passage discussed by Gnllka concerns the apostles: *evang.* 2,431 and the interpolation 431a, see pp. 240–4, but does not affect the analysis of their representation. Colombi (2000) proposed emendations for the text of book one, but not for the passages used in this chapter. The Latin of book two is derived from Santorelli (2005), for book three I use Bauer (1999). Both authors have sometimes slightly changed the text by following text critical remarks published after Huemer's edition. Two bilingual editions of the entire work are Knappitsch (1909–1913) and Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011), the latter of whom provides a extensive commentary. A Spanish translation by Bejarano (1998) offers a succinct commentary that focuses more on the text of the Gospels than on Juvencus' versification.

30 The origins of Biblical epic has been discussed primarily by Herzog (1975), who stresses the "Erbaulichkeit", the educational function of the genre, and Roberts (1985), who considers it as a corollary of the paraphrases made as school exercises.

according to Jerome's *Chronicon ad 329 p. Chr* and are pervaded with citations of and allusions to well known classical authors, especially Vergil.³¹ Jerome wrote about Juvencus' versification that it followed the Biblical text *paene ad verbum*, but such a characterisation seems to be exaggerated.³² Juvencus not only tries to embellish the Biblical story,³³ but also interferes with his model text, by omitting or adding (minor) elements. One example is his eagerness to 'Romanise' the stories of the gospels and to diminish Judaic elements, which were foreign to a Roman audience.³⁴

There may have been connections between Juvencus and bishop Ossius of Cordoba, a counsellor at the court of Constantine and chair of the council of Nicaea.³⁵ But even if Juvencus had no connections to the court, he felt some sympathy for the emperor: in *evang.* 4,802–12, he praises Constantine for bringing peace to his age. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of this statement.

In his *prooemium* (27 verses that precede the first book of the *Evang.*), Juvencus expresses the hope that his work will save him from the eternal fire (v. 22: *hoc etenim forsitan me subtrahet igni*).³⁶ It will also provide him with eternal fame and reward (v. 18: *immortale decus (...) meritumque*): his work about the life bringing deeds of Christ (*Christi uitalia gesta*, v. 19) surpasses the famous works about the lies of men (pagan epics).³⁷ However, for Juvencus this is not a reason to reject poetry, but to transform it into something valuable

31 The influence of the model epic, the *Aeneid*, is prevailing, see Roberts (2004) 57–8, but due to the didactic nature of Juvencus' epic, quotations of the *Eclogae* and *Georgica* also have a place in his work. Green (2006) 50–71 (justly) argues that the influence of the *Aeneid* on the representation of the apostles in Juvencus' poem is limited.

32 Cf. Thraede (2001) 884.

33 Cf. Zannoni (1958) 101: "(...) prorsus evanescit (sc. in Juvencus' poem) illa simplicitas atque efficacia, quas tantopere in evangelicis narrationibus admiramur."

34 Poinssotte (1979), who argues for a pagan audience, explains the omission of Jewish names and words by Juvencus' anti-Semitism, see e.g. pp. 30–2. However, it seems difficult to prove that Juvencus was more anti-Semitic than other Christians in his time; his anti-Semitism seems not to have been the main reason for the omissions (cf. 1.2.2.3).

35 Juvencus maybe came to the court of Constantine via Ossius. There, he might have developed his idea to versify the Gospels from his contacts with Lactantius and Eusebius, see Kirsch (1989) 71. I agree with Green (2006) 120 that this is a possibility, but unfortunately there is no evidence for Kirsch' tempting hypothesis. For Ossius, see Herzog and Divjak (1989) § 583.

36 "Der Gedanke nun, dass sein Gedicht ihm beim Endgericht zum Verdienst angerechnet werden konnte, setzt voraus, dass er sein Dichten als etwas Gott wohlgefälliges, als ein Dienst Gottes sah.", Van der Nat (1973), 254.

37 These works are famous for a long time (*tempora longa*, v. 7) but not for eternity (*aeternae in saecula laudis*, v. 17): cf. Van der Nat (1973) 251.

instead.³⁸ He takes his place in the literary tradition by referring to Homer and Vergil, mentioning Smyrna (one of the alleged birthplaces of the Greek poet, v. 9) and the Mincius (a river near Mantua, the birthplace of Vergil, v. 10) which he links to the *dulcedo Maronis*. Another reason for Juvencus to write his epic is that he wants to praise Christ by embellishing the stories written in the gospels: *ut Christo digna loquamur* (v. 27).³⁹ Moreover, the charm of a poetic text was also meant to heighten its effectiveness.⁴⁰ At the end of the proemium, the traditional pagan inspiration from the Muses is replaced by a Christian alternative: inspiration by the Holy Spirit, streaming from its source, the river Jordan (instead of Mount Helicon).⁴¹

Juvencus wrote for an upper class audience. Most probably, he aimed at reaching Christians or people positively disposed towards Christianity in particular. For those who still had some doubts about Scripture's plain language, which was praised by the Church Fathers, Juvencus' epic can have been a hybrid form which was most welcome.⁴² For others, as for Juvencus himself, the language of his epic added to God's praise. For a non-Christian some passages would be obscure and it is hard to see how the poem should have convinced pagans of the superiority of Christianity over paganism: "The hostile would be confirmed in their attitudes, and the curious baffled."⁴³

1.2.1 *The Apostles in Juvencus' Euangeliorum libri quattuor*

The apostles are often mentioned in Juvencus' poem: this is probably mainly due to its length (more than 3200 hexameters) and its topic (the *Christi uitalia*

38 See Gärtner (2004) 431–6 (cf. p. 443), acknowledging the importance of this view for the development of Christian poetry.

39 This argument is also found in *evang.* 4,804–5: *Versibus ut nostris diuinae gloria legis / ornamenta libens caperet terrestria linguae*. 'In order that the glory of the divine law through our verses deliberately catches the earthly decorations of language.' Translations of the *evang.* are my own, unless indicated otherwise.

40 Van der Nat (1973) 255.

41 Cf. Van der Nat (1973) 252–3.

42 But cf. McClure (1981) 307–8, stressing that Biblical epic never took the place of the original Scriptures.

43 Green (2006) 131. An example of an obscure passage for a non-Christian readership is *evang.* 4,692–4 where Juvencus leaves out the well-known words of Christ on the cross, cited in their original Hebraic-Aramaic form in the Bible: "Heli Heli lama zaphani" (Matt 27.46). Although the word 'Heli' (God), which resembles the name of the prophet, has been left out, Juvencus does mention the reaction of the spectators who think that Jesus is calling the prophet Elijah. Only a Christian audience would understand the passage, see Dijkstra (2009a) 172. Fontaine (1981) 79–80 is one of the scholars assuming that Juvencus envisaged a wider audience than Christians alone.

gesta, according to *praefatio* 19, or the story of the gospels, in which the disciples are often mentioned). Although every early Christian author was inspired by the Bible one way or another, Juvencus' case is particular since he deliberately rewrote the Biblical text, while following it closely and keeping less distance towards his model than other authors used to do. Significant changes vis-à-vis the Biblical model might reveal Juvencus' view on the apostles. It would therefore be very instructive to know which Biblical text he read. Unfortunately, this is not known. His slightly varying on the Biblical text does suggest, however, that he used a written version and did not rewrite the Bible by heart, although this cannot be excluded. Since it seems to be sure that Juvencus came from Spain, he probably used a Latin version and not a Greek one. However, the so-called *Vetus Latina* consisted of many different versions of which many are lost nowadays. Moreover, almost nothing is known about Juvencus and his environment. Although opinions in scholarship greatly differ about the question of Juvencus' model text, use of the *Itala* seems most probable.⁴⁴

1.2.2 *The Apostles as a Group*

Of the approximately 130 instances of naming one or more of the apostles, Juvencus 78 times indicates the apostles as a group. Given the fact that Juvencus could not deviate too much from his Biblical example, an analysis of the words used for the apostles may reveal his opinion about them. This section will therefore be structured according to the way the group of twelve apostles is referred to. It appears that Juvencus has a clear preference for the

44 The *Itala* is assumed as a source by Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 35. Marold (1890, cited by Orbán (1995) 335–336) 329–341 saw a particular influence of the versions *a*, *ff*¹ and *h*. However, the latter opinion was based on only 10 citations. But Orbán (1995) *passim* assumes that Juvencus used the *Afra* (based on 18 citations in the Sermon on the Mount). Bauer (1999) 40–41 notes that Juvencus' source has been lost, but deems the use of the *Itala* more probable than that of the *Afra*. He suggests that Juvencus also read the Greek original. Röttger (1996) 10 (note 12) sees Juvencus' use of the Greek text as generally acknowledged: "Daß Iuvencus auch den griechischen Text (gr) benutzt hat, ist Communis opinio und wird als Arbeitshypothese vorausgesetzt." Moerschini & Norelli (2000) 471 suggest the use of the *Diatessaron* of Tatian: "C'est une sorte de *Diatessaron* en langue latine; peut-être même, selon certains, Juvencus aurait-il effectivement suivi le *Diatessaron* de Tatien". Green (2006) rejects the idea of a Greek text (p. 389) or the *Diatessaron* (p. 23) as Juvencus' sources and concludes that a definite answer cannot be found (p. 390). Heinsdorff (2003) 339–480 (*Zur lateinischen Evangelienvorlage des Juvencus*) is exemplary for the discussion: despite his extensive research on Juvencus' model, he cannot decide which version Juvencus used.

word *discipuli* (58 instances, including inflected forms).⁴⁵ Other words he uses are *comites* (4), *socii* (3), *minister* (2), *fratres* (1), *turba* (1), *chorus* (1), *plebs* (1), and *amici* (1).⁴⁶ *Discipulus* is also the word most often used in the Bible: therefore, Juvencus shows his dedication to the original text of the gospels by using *discipuli*. Moreover, although the word was not used in epic, it was common in classical Roman poetry.⁴⁷

1.2.2.1 *Discipuli*

One of the main features of Juvencus' versification technique is the addition of adjectives or attributive participles to the names of characters in his story.⁴⁸ This feature is remarkably scarce with regard to the word *discipuli*. Juvencus never adds a clarifying or adorning adjective to the word *discipuli*. An attributive participle is used fourteen times. In most cases, the participle refers to the acts the apostles are performing in conformity with the Biblical model: these participles do not colour the view on the apostles held by Juvencus or characters in the story. Juvencus shows a preference for the phrase *sectantes discipuli*, which he uses five times (*evang.* 2,562; 3,182; 3,259; 3,362; 3,624). Two times, the apostles are described as wondering (*mirantum discipulorum* in *evang.* 2,304 and *discipuli mirantes* in *evang.* 2,755).⁴⁹ Just in two cases they are part of a comparison: Juvencus describes them as 'terrified sailors' (*nautaeque pauentes*,

45 The word *discipuli* occurs in *evang.* book 1: 453; book 2: 12, 19, 34, 97, 151, 248, 295, 302, 304, 350, 425, 509, 526, 562, 568, 755, 794; book 3: 2, 69, 78, 81, 93, 135, 152, 182, 204, 210, 215, 255, 259, 270, 288, 335, 362, 371, 396, 479, 521, 600, 624, 630, 661; book 4: 87, 92, 321, 323, 414, 422, 429, 433, 448, 480, 494, 505, 522, 536, 737, 761, 766, 783, 790. In *evang.* 2,526 and 3,69 Juvencus applies *discipuli* to the disciples of John the Baptist, in 2,475 and 477 *discipulus* is used in a parable and means 'servant': Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 271 claim that the word *discipuli* is used 64 times for the apostles.

46 *Comites*: 2,321–3,323–3,527–3,584; *socii*: 3,126–3,238–4,508; *minister*: 2,444–3,89; *fratres* 4,773; *turba* 4,785; *chorus* 4,787; *plebs* 3,494; *iuvēnis* 4,571; and *amici* 2,100. Consequently, Ermini (1909) 107–8 was not right in stating that Proba was the first to use the words *comites* and *socii* for the apostles. In *evang.* 2,173–4 (= John 2.22) Juvencus writes *digni... viri* (*digni* added compared to the Gospel): the text is probably about the twelve, but maybe about a larger group of Jesus' adherents. For this passage, see Santorelli (2005) 132. In *evang.* 2,562, Juvencus uses *populus sectantum discipulorum*, see below.

47 See Heinsdorff (2003) 227–8 about Juvencus naming the apostles. He does not mention *fratres*, *turba*, *viri* and *chorus*.

48 Hevia (1980) 263–5.

49 The other participles used—*cingentibus* (*evang.* 1,453), *mercantes* (*evang.* 2,248), *mercentes* (*evang.* 2,567–568), *reduces* (for *redeuntes*, see *evang.* 2,295), *fantes* (*evang.* 4,414), *recubantibus* (*evang.* 4,332–3) and *pressos* (*evang.* 4,505)—also reflect acts of the apostles and are employed in an impartial way.

2,34), which is an addition compared to the Biblical text about the storm scene (Matt 8.23–27/*evang.* 2,25–42). In another storm scene, he also adds *nautae* (*evang.* 3,104/Matt 14.25).

Although the apostles are thus often described in an impartial way (in comparison with the Bible) by Juvenius, several instances remain in which Juvenius does interfere with the image of the disciples as provided by the gospels.⁵⁰ In some passages, the apostles seem to have been described more favourably in Juvenius' poem than in the corresponding Biblical text.

One of these is *evang.* 2,151–2, which strongly emphasises the faith of the apostles. *His signis digne credentum discipulorum / perpetuam stabili firmavit robore mentem*⁵¹ is the versification of John 2.11: *Hoc primum signum fecit Iesus in Cana Galilaeae et manifestavit honorem suum et crediderunt in eum discipuli sui*.⁵² As is often the case, the topographical information has been left out in the versification.⁵³ Although the focus is on the power of the miracles that Jesus performed, the extent of the disciples' faith is positively rendered by the words *stabili... robore* and *perpetuam*.⁵⁴ Another instance of Juvenius stressing the faith of the apostles can be found in *evang.* 3,539–40 in the addition (*uos...*) *mentis penetralibus altis / credentes*.⁵⁵

Another example of a favourable reference to the apostles is *evang.* 3,182–4, which describes a Canaanite woman asking Jesus for help, and the disciples complaining about the fact that she is following them: *Tunc etiam precibus sectantum discipulorum / respondit, proprias genitoris malle bidentes / cogere, quas vanus late disperserat error*.⁵⁶ The text of Matt 15.23 (*At Iesus non respon-*

50 Moreover, in Juvenius' work, the word *discipuli* is very often used at the beginning (30 times) or at the end of a verse (12), see Santorelli (2005) 90. This might at least partly indicate the importance of the apostles for Juvenius, also reflected by the fact that they are 28 times mentioned in the nominative case.

51 'Through this signs, he forever affirmed the mind of the appropriately faithful apostles with a stable power.'

52 The Latin cited from the Bible is de *Itala* version of the *Vetus Latina* as reconstructed in Jülicher (1963).

53 See Opelt (1975) *passim* and for a general statement id. 192: "(...) Christus und die Jünger bewegen sich trotz dieser Namen gleichsam im geographischen Niemandsland."

54 Cf. De Wit (1947) 46 at *perpetuam*: "per prolepsin dicit poeta pro: ut perpetuo in Se crederent."

55 The words of Jesus are directed to all apostles (cf. *uos* in v. 539). However, Jesus speaks immediately after a question of Peter. The Biblical *Iesus autem dixit illis* (Matt 19.28) is versified by Juvenius as: *Talibus at Petro uerbis respondit Iesus*. Probably, Juvenius thought it to be more logical that Jesus directly answered to the person who asked the question. It also shows Juvenius' emphasis of Peter's leadership over the apostles.

56 'But then he answered to the requests of the disciples who followed him that he preferred to bring his Father's own sheep together, which idle error had dispersed widely.'

dit ei verbum. Et accedentes discipuli eius rogabant dicentes: 'Dimitte eam, quia clamat post nos.') is reduced here to *precibus sectantum discipulorum*. The reason for the apostles' request (they want the woman to be sent away because she annoys them), is omitted in Juvenecus' text: it looks as if the apostles asked Christ to help the woman instead, which he does in the end. Their irritation, irrelevant from a theological point of view—whereas Jesus gives a substantial reason not to answer the woman's request in Matt 15.24—is omitted. Juvenecus provides a more favourable image of the apostles by restructuring the passage. Moreover, the poet keeps the story going by leaving out some details.

In the scene of the feeding of five thousand people, the doubt of the apostles about the possibility to feed all the people is not versified by Juvenecus. Matt 15.33–4 reads: *Dicunt autem ei discipuli: unde ergo in deserto panes tantos ut saturentur turbae istae? 34. Et ait illis Iesus: 'Quot panes habetis?' At illi dixerunt: 'Septem et paucos pisciculos.'* This passage has been rewritten as *Discipuli Christo ostendunt septem sibi panes / esse et pisciculos alimenta ad proxima paucos*.⁵⁷ The lack of faith of the apostles in their master's power is thus omitted in the versification.⁵⁸

The fidelity and devotion of the apostles is emphasised in *evang.* 3.362–63, where the father of a boy possessed by a demon asks Jesus to cure his son: *Nam tua discipuli sectantes iussa frequenter / conisi nulla in solidum mihi dona dederunt*.⁵⁹ The passages *sectantes iussa frequenter conisi* and *in solidum* are Juvenecus' inventions, not found in the Bible (Matt 17.16: *Et optuli eum discipulis tuis et non poterunt curare eum*). While *iussa frequenter conisi* emphasises that the disciples tried to cure through divine power, as Jesus ordered them, *in solidum* seems to suggest that they had at least some success (of which there is no sign in the Bible) although it did not last.⁶⁰

In two other passages the apostles' devotion is also mentioned, focalised by the Pharisees who were seen as opponents of the teachings of Christ. In

57 *Evang.* 3.210–1: 'The apostles show to Christ the seven breads they have and some little fishes to appease the first appetite.' Note that the Biblical *paucos pisciculos* is retained by Juvenecus.

58 Some verses before these sentences, the addition of *secreto* (*evang.* 3.205) could be seen as statement to show the intimacy between Jesus and his disciples. This intimacy can also be seen in *evang.* 3.269–70: *Tunc Christus cunctis arridens pectore blando / conquirat, quae sit sententia discipulorum* ('Then Christ asks with a smooth heart, while smiling to all of them, the opinion of the disciples'). *Arridens pectore blando* is added by Juvenecus.

59 'As the disciples following you, although they have frequently leaned on your commandments, did not provide me with lasting benefits.'

60 This is affirmed in *evang.* 3.372 where the disciples ask why they could not provide the boy with a complete cure (*totiens temptata medulla: totiens* does not correspond to an equivalent in the Biblical text).

evang. 4,736 and 4,783 the *fera audacia* of the disciples and the *rapiens audacia discipulorum* is mentioned. *Evang.* 4,736 is part of a speech of the Pharisees to Pilate (they ask for a guard at Jesus' grave to prevent the disciples from taking his body away, cf. Matt 27.63–4):

Sed petimus, custos miles noua funera seruet,
ne fera discipulis furandi audacia corpus
consurgat turbetque recens insania plebem.⁶¹

We ask you this, that a guardsman will watch over the new grave, lest the fierce boldness of the disciples to steal the body arise and renewed madness agitate the people. (*evang.* 4,735–7)

The strong words in verse 4,737 (*turbetque recens insania*, varying on the Bible's "this last deception will be worse than the first") stress the iniquity of the disciples in the eyes of the Pharisees. At the end of book four, after Jesus' resurrection, the Pharisees pay the frightened guards of Jesus' grave to spread rumours about the disciples taking away their master's body (Matt 28.12–4): *corpus* (...) / *occulte rapiens audacia discipulorum*.⁶² The *audacia* of the apostles can only be interpreted as a positive sign of their devotion and zeal.

The willingness of the apostles to obey to Jesus' precepts is emphasised in *evang.* 3,630: *Discipuli celeri complent praecepta paratu*.⁶³ The word *celeri* has no corresponding term(s) in the Bible (Matt 21.6: *Euntes autem discipuli fecerunt sicut praecipit illis Iesus*).

In his versification of the story of the withering fig tree, Juvenius replaces Jesus' harsh words about the lack of faith and the hesitations of the apostles by milder terms. In the gospel, one reads (Matt 21.20–1):

Et uidentes discipuli mirati sunt dicentes: 'Quomodo continuo aruit?' 21
Respondens autem Iesus ait: 'Amen dico uobis: si habueritis fidem et non hae-
sitaueritis, non solum de ficulnea facietis, sed et si monti huic dixeritis: tolle te
et iacta te in mare, fiet.'

This passage is versified by Juvenius in *evang.* 3,661–73. With regard to the representation of the apostles, the first four lines are most interesting:

61 *Sed* is the reading of Hansson (1950) 58–9, instead of *Hoc* by Huemer (1891).

62 *Evang.* 4,782–3: 'The boldness of the disciples furtively stealing the body.'

63 'The disciples comply with these precepts, obeying quickly.'

Discipuli celerem mirantur in arbore mortem
 sed Christus stupidis adsistens talia fatur:
 'Nunc ligni istius nostro stupuistis honore
 desisse vires terrenos ducere sucos.'⁶⁴

The disciples wondered about the quick death of the tree, but Christ, standing nearby, spoke to the amazed men as follows "Now you were amazed that through our power the earthly strengths to suck vital juices became absent from this tree."

Juvencus replaces amazement (*stupidis*, v. 662, and *stupuistis*, v. 663) with the lack of faith and hesitation mentioned in Matt 21.21 (*si habueritis fidem et non haesitaveritis*), which seems to include the apostles in a more natural—and therefore less obvious—way into the narrative.

In just two passages, a slightly negative opinion about the disciples could be detected: in *evang.* 2,304 and 2,755 the amazement of the disciples about the words of their master is emphasised by the addition of *mirantum* and *mirantes* respectively.⁶⁵ In 2,304–5 (. . .) *Sed tum mirantum discipulorum / inter se occultis currebat sermo loquellis*) the addition of *occultis* indicates that the apostles do not dare to speak out loudly what they presume: do they foresee that they do not understand their master (again)?⁶⁶ By emphasising their amazement, Juvencus stresses the lack of understanding of the twelve, which contributes to a less favourable representation of the apostles, but in *evang.* 2,304 he seems to mitigate his criticism by adding *occultis*. The corresponding Biblical text is John 4.33: *Dicebant ergo discipuli eius ad alterutrum* (. . .).

The versification of Matt 13.10 in *evang.* 2,755 is less significant: *Et accedentes discipuli eius dixerunt ei* becomes *Talia discipuli mirantes dicta requirunt*.⁶⁷ In both passages, Juvencus' desire to dramatise the account and exalt Christ influences his versification.

64 Hereafter, Juvencus elaborates the remark on the Biblical faith that can move even mountains in a passage of nine lines (54 words for 22 in the Bible, generally Juvencus uses twice as much words—even more in book 3—, see Green (2006) 37), cf. Bauer (1999) 246: "Die einfache biblische Wendung *tolle te et iacta te in mare* (Matt. 21, 21; vgl. Lk. 17, 6) wird zu einem fast sintflutartigem Szenario erweitert (. . .)".

65 The metre also seems to stress the apostles' amazement in line 304, see Santorelli (2005) 172–3: "Il ritmo spondaico dei vv. 304 s. sottolinea lo stupore dei discepoli, mentre il v. 306 è scandito da una sequenza di datili che segnano il superamento dello stupore attraverso una possibile spiegazione."

66 'But then, while the disciples were amazed, a rumour ran among them with secret words.'

67 'But the disciples, wondering about such words, ask . . .'

1.2.2.2 Other Words Used to Indicate the Apostles

Although the apostles are most often indicated with the word *discipuli*, Juvenecus uses several other words too. The comparisons of the disciples to sailors (*evang.* 2,34 and 3,104) have already been mentioned: they emphasise the anxiety of the apostles when they are at sea in a storm. The first passage is part of the versification of Matt 8.23–7 (Jesus calms the storm): the emphasis in the gospel is on the fear of the disciples. The other passage belongs to the story of Jesus walking on the water (Matt 14.22–33) where the stress is on Jesus and Peter, who tries to walk towards his master. In *evang.* 2,34–5 little is added compared to the corresponding Biblical text Matt 8.25 (*Et accesserunt discipuli eius et suscitauerunt eum dicentes: Domine, libera nos, perimus.*): *Illum discipuli pariter nautaeque pauentes / euigilare rogant pontique pericula monstrant.*⁶⁸ Since there were no seamen in the boat according to the Biblical story, *nautae pauentes* is to be understood as describing the apostles. The word *pauentes* underlines the fear of the apostles. The word *nautae* enlivens the depiction of the story. The direct discourse of the Bible is replaced by *pontique pericula*.

Juvenecus has altered the other passage in a more significant way. The fear of the apostles is discussed in detail (*evang.* 3,103–8):⁶⁹

(...) -mirabile visu!

Iamque propinquabat puppi, sed nescia nautae

105 attoniti tremulo uibrabant corda pauore
clamoremque simul confusa mente dederunt.

Tum pauidis Christus loquitur: 'Timor omnis abesto,
credentumque regat uegetans constantia mentem.'

Wonderful to behold! He already approached the ship, but the seamen, astonished by tremulous fear, trembled in their ignorant hearts and they cried while their mind was confused. Then Christ speaks to the terrified: "Put away any fear, and may firmness invigorate and rule the mind of those who believe."

In Matt 14.26–7 the situation is described as follows:

68 'The disciples and the trembling seamen with them ask him to wake up and show him the dangers of the sea.' For the vast influence of the *Aeneid* here, see Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 291–4 and Green (2006) 62–3.

69 Cf. the analysis in Pollmann (2004) 89–90.

Videntes autem illum super mare ambulans turbati sunt dicentes quia fantasma est et praetimore clamauerunt. 27 Statimque Iesus locutus est eis dicens: 'Constantes estote. Nolite timere (...).'

The word *pavidis* in *evang.* 3,107 has no corresponding equivalent in the Bible and emphasises the fear of the apostles, probably in order to make the scene more lively.⁷⁰ *Credentumque* stresses that the apostles do not have (enough) faith. However, *nescia corda* (*evang.* 3,104–5) seems almost an exonerating, positive addition. *Nolite timere* is rendered with the Vergilian phrase *timor omnis abesto* (*Aen.* 11,14), referring to a victorious (safe) moment when Aeneas has killed king Mezentius, ally of Turnus.⁷¹

A slightly more common term for the apostles in Juvenius' work is *comites*, which is also used twice in the singular to designate an apostle, for Phillip and Peter. In *evang.* 3,323 it is used to indicate Peter, James and John instead of the twelve. The word is used three times for the twelve apostles, always in an impartial context.

The word *socii* is used three times to indicate the disciples.⁷² In *evang.* 4,508 it is used by Juvenius to clarify the Biblical text. In the gospel, Jesus leaves Peter and the sons of Zebedee (Matt 26.37–8) and prays to his Father. In Matt 26.40 he returns for the first time to the three apostles and speaks to Peter. In Matt 26.43 he returns again (and summons the disciples to wake up, Matt 26.45–6), but it is not made explicit to whom of the apostles he returns: it seems as if he just awakes the three disciples whom he had separated from the eight others. But immediately afterwards, Jesus is arrested when the eleven disciples are with him (Matt 26.56). Juvenius clarifies the scene by indicating that Peter, James and John may see their fellow disciples again, by adding (*licet*) *sociosque reuisere vestros*. The phrase emphasises the unity among the disciples, like in

70 "(...) a mettere in evidenza la psicologia dei personaggi (...)", Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 343. Cf. Bauer (1999) 105: "Unbiblisch ist auch die Epiphaniefurcht der Jünger (...)."

71 The phrase *timor omnis abesto*, coined by Vergil, appears four times in Latin poetry until Prudentius, always in the last part of a verse. Where Juvenius employs it in his account of Jesus encouraging the apostles, like Proba in v. 665 (Jesus appears to his apostles after his resurrection), Prudentius again uses it in a context similar to the original, when rejoicing at the defeat of Alaric at Pollentia (c. *Symm.* 2,737). It is also cited in the cento of Hosidius Geta (*Medea Tragoedia* 181).

72 Bauer (1999) 155 is mistaken when he states that Juvenius uses the word five times for the disciples. Juvenius indeed uses it five times in the *evang.*, but in 4,287 (*daemonis horrendi sociis*) the word means 'allies of the devil' and in 4,176 (*socium*) 'friend' or 'colleague'. In both cases it does not refer to the twelve.

evang. 3,126 where *cuncti, nauigio socios quos casus habebat* versifies the neutral phrase *qui autem in nauicula erant* (Matt 14.33).⁷³

In *evang.* 4,481 Peter, James and John are indicated by the word *ministros*.⁷⁴ In *evang.* 3,89 *ministri* is used to refer to all of the apostles. The word is also used in a general meaning ('servant', e.g. in *evang.* 2,444).

In *evang.* 2,100 Jesus incites Philip to follow 'his friends' (*suis amicis*, indirect discourse). This is an addition to the corresponding Biblical text, where Jesus says in a direct discourse to Philip: '*Sequere me*'.⁷⁵ The use of the word *amicus* emphasises the bond between the disciples and Jesus.

In *evang.* 3,494 Juvencus uses *plebs sectantum* to indicate the apostles: he does something similar in *evang.* 2,562 (*populus sectantum discipulorum*).⁷⁶ There seems no specific reason to use these terms here.

In *evang.* 4,784–9 (Matt 28.16–7) Juvencus stresses the fear and the lack of faith of the apostles:

Iamque Galilaeos conscenderat anxia montes
 785 mandatis Christi concurrens turba suorum:
 cernitur ecce suis proles ueneranda Tonantis,
 illum procumbens sancte chorus omnis adorat;
 nec tamen in cunctis pariter fundata manebat
 pectoribus uirtus, nam pars dubitabat eorum.

And the scared group of his disciples had already ascended the Galilean mountains, gathering on Christ's commands: look, he is seen by them as the venerable sprout of the thunder God. And the whole chorus devotedly prostrates and adores him. But there was not a similarly well-founded faith in all their hearts, because some of them doubted.

This passage, which in the Gospel of Matthew describes the last meeting of the apostles with Jesus, is the only one in which Juvencus employs the words *turba* and *chorus* for the (now eleven) apostles. Their lack of faith is emphasised

73 'all those, who chance had as companions in the boat.' The other instance with the word *socii* is *evang.* 3,238, where Jesus addresses his disciples to teach them (cf. Matt 16.6 seq.).

74 Cf. Bauer (1999) 77–8: "Ohne den Zusatz *patris/patrii*—die Hss. Variieren an allen entsprechenden Stellen—bezeichnet *ministri* bei Juvencus üblicherweise die Apostel." But *ministri* appears just twice in the *evang.*

75 De Wit (1947) 36 points to the Greek text of Luke 12.4: *Ἀέγω δὲ ὑμῖν τοῖς φίλοις μου*. This is another passage, but suggests that Juvencus' addition was not original or unusual.

76 Bauer (1999) 210.

by verses 788–9, which do not have a corresponding Biblical example. In v. 784, Juvencus adds *anxia*: apparently, the apostles are afraid to meet someone whom they expect to be a ghost, because they cannot imagine that Christ has really risen (cf. Luke 24.37).⁷⁷ At the other hand, the addition of *sancte*, emphasising the piety of the apostles, suggests that their fear is a holy fear.

Just once, the disciples are called *fratres* in Juvencus (*evang.* 4,773), which is a repetition of *fratribus* used in Matt 28.10.

1.2.2.3 Omissions of Apostle Names

The list of apostles, which can be found in all the synoptic gospels (Matt 10.1–4; Mark 3.16–9; Luke 6.14–6), has not been versified by Juvencus. The election of the twelve disciples is described without naming them in *evang.* 2,430–1: *Haec fatus populo ex omni delecta seorsum / fortia conglomerat bis seno pectora coetu*.⁷⁸ Presumably Juvencus has omitted the names, because he wanted to avoid alienating effects in his work: he often omitted Jewish names, e.g. in *evang.* 2,100 (John 1.44) and 4,714–5 (Matt 27.55–6). Moreover, most apostles do not have an important role in the gospels.⁷⁹ Therefore, Juvencus was not interested in the apostles as individuals (cf. 1.4.2 below), but as a group of Jesus' closest followers.

After *evang.* 2,162 the disciples referred to in John 2.17 are not mentioned, maybe because Juvencus tends to avoid citations of the Old Testament.⁸⁰ Although in *evang.* 2,101–346 Juvencus versified the Gospel of John, he left out

77 But cf. Knappitsch (1912–1913) 85: “*anxia*—et propter ea, quae euentura essent et propter Iudaeorum metum.”

78 ‘After he had said this, he gathered in a group twelve strong hearts, elected from all the people.’

79 “Nel tipo di parafrasi praticata da Giovenco spesso i personaggi minori dell’azione biblica perdono le connotazioni geografiche e sociali (...)”, Santorelli (2005) 112. This aspect of Juvencus’ versification technique has also much been discussed as “Entjudaisierung”, particularly after the study of the poet’s anti-Semitism by Poinssotte (1979). Most scholars have a less outspoken view than he, and explain the anti-Jewish features of the poem by the widespread negative view on Jews that was embedded in classical and early Christian culture, without considering Juvencus to be more anti-Semitic than others: cf. e.g. Green (2006) 103–112. This seems to be the better explanation (if it is combined with stylistic aspects). Moreover, Green remarks that Juvencus did not leave out every reference to Jewish culture (p. 109). However, Green’s argument about metrical considerations as a reason for the omission of Jewish names (p. 106) can be doubted: especially in foreign names the spelling could easily be adapted to the constraints of the metre.

80 John 2.17 reads: *Rememorati sunt discipuli eius, quia scriptum est: Zelus domus tuae comedit me*. See Santorelli (2005) 88. Maybe in this case Juvencus also wants to retain the vivacity of the story, see id. 128.

John 3.22–4.2. Consequently, he does not versify a remark about the fact that the disciples were baptising people. In an epic about the *Christi uitalia gesta*, it is not surprising that Juvencus omitted this Biblical verse. In *evang.* 2,728 Juvencus has omitted the reference to the disciples which can be read in the corresponding Biblical passage Matt 12.49: *Et extendens manum in discipulos suos dixit: Ecce mater mea et fratres mei*. But here the evangelist seems to suggest that Jesus spoke about the mass of people he is talking to (Matt 12.46).⁸¹ Maybe Juvencus has omitted the designation *discipulos* to avoid confusion between the twelve and Jesus' other followers.

After *evang.* 4,315 Juvencus has left out the versification of John 11.5–10, which one would expect to follow. In the Biblical passage the dilatory attitude of Jesus (he rests two days before going to Lazarus) and the fear of the apostles for the Jews is described:

5. Diligebat autem Iesus Martham et sororem eius Mariam et Lazarum. 6. Vt ergo audiuit, quia infirmatur tunc quidem mansit Iesus, in eodem loco biduo. 7. Deinde post haec dicit discipulis suis: 'Eamus in Iudaeum iterum.' 8. Dicunt ei discipuli: 'Rabbi, nunc quaerebant te lapidare Iudaei et iterum uadis illuc?' 9. Respondit Iesus: 'Nonne duodecim horae sunt diei? 10. Si quis ambulauerit inter die, non offendit, quia lucem mundi huius uidet.

Maybe Juvencus wanted to avoid these words because verses 9 and 10 are rather obscure. However, a willingness to depict the apostles positively could also have been a reason: Juvencus did not want to versify the reprimand of the disciples by Jesus.⁸² The fact that Juvencus chose to include the story of Lazarus in his versification that primarily follows the gospel of Matthew, reflects the popularity of this story of resurrection,⁸³ which is also a clear example of the *Christi uitalia gesta*.

The washing of the feet before the Last Supper, only described in John 13.3–20, is not versified by Juvencus. Although the poet in general followed the Gospel of Matthew, it is remarkable that he did not make an exception for

81 Hagner (1993) 360.

82 Deproost (2000) 133 comments: "Considérant peut-être qu'ils relèvent plutôt de l'anecdote narrative, dont il cherche constamment à dépouiller son poème, Juvencus omet ensuite de paraphraser les versets bibliques qui rapportent les lenteurs puis le départ du Christ pour la Judée, et la réaction apeurée des apôtres." However, in general Juvencus does versify lessons of Jesus like those that are described in John 11.9–10. Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 400 only mention the omission, but do not try to explain it.

83 The resurrection of Lazarus is one of the most popular scenes in early Christian art, because it was seen as an example of the resurrection from the death at the Last Judgment, see e.g. Dresken-Weiland (2010) 213–33.

this famous story, especially since he did so in other cases (e.g. the story of Lazarus). Probably the modesty shown by Christ in this Biblical passage did not fit Juvencus' idea of the divine.⁸⁴

1.2.3 *Individual Apostles*

There are of course also instances of individual apostles mentioned by Juvencus. They are usually called by their proper names. Just three times Juvencus uses a general noun to indicate an individual apostle: *iuvēnis* and *comes* for Peter (both in *evang.* 4,571) and *comes* for Philip (*evang.* 2,100).⁸⁵ In three other passages Juvencus refers to some of the twelve apostles with a general word (*comites*: *evang.* 3,323; *ministros*: *evang.* 4,481; *discipulos*: *evang.* 4,494: Peter and the two sons of Zebedee are referred to).

Only Peter and Judas are mentioned more than three times. By contrast, Bartholomew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddeus and Simon the Zealot (Cananeus) are never mentioned.⁸⁶

1.2.3.1 Peter

In the Bible as well as in the *Euangelia*, Peter is mentioned more often than all the others apostles. He is indicated 27 times by his name Peter, four times as Simon and once as *comes* and *iuvēnis*.⁸⁷ He is the only disciple of Jesus whose personality has been elaborated upon in the *evang.*⁸⁸

In contrast with the group of the twelve apostles, Peter as an individual is often openly depicted in a positive way by Juvencus.⁸⁹ Several positive *epitheta*

84 Other passages in which the apostles are mentioned and which have been left out by Juvencus are too insignificant to mention separately: Matt 23.1, Matt 26.1–2, Matt 27.56 (names are often omitted; in this case the addition 'of the sons of Zebedee'). Matt 13.44–52 is omitted entirely, including the remark of the apostles that they understood what Jesus told them.

85 Nathanael is mentioned as *comes* in *evang.* 2,117. Cf. p. 5 about this enigmatic figure.

86 Since Juvencus only versifies the Gospels, Paul and Matthias are not mentioned either.

87 *Petrus*, book 1: 422, 767; book 2: –; book 3: 110, 114, 122, 159, 271, 273, 274, 278, 296, 319, 324, 382, 384, 387, 433, 538, 534; book 4: 467, 473, 475, 482, 496, 539, 570, 580. *Simon*: 1,422; 3,120; 3,391; 4,583. *Comes/iuvēnis*: 4,571. Maybe Juvencus has used *comes* only to refer to the *Aeneid* (6,528) where Ulysses is also called *comes additus*, see Green (2006) 64. But there is no link in content between this passage and the *Euangelia*. *evang.* 1,767–70 is the versification of the healing of Peter's mother-in-law by Christ (Matt 8.14–5). Juvencus seems to have chosen this story as the end of book one for compositional matters only, see Thraede (1998), pp. 288–9 in particular; the person of Peter is mentioned in an impartial way.

88 Kany (2001) 293.

89 Cf. Thraede (2001) 901–3.

accompany the figure of Peter:⁹⁰ *praesolidus* (*evang.* 1,422), *stabilis* (*evang.* 3,271) *fortis* (*evang.* 3,273) and *fortissime* (*evang.* 4,473). A striking addition by Juvenecus regarding the Biblical text can be found in *evang.* 3,534: *Tum Petrus fidei munitus moenibus inquit*.⁹¹ This is the versification of the Biblical phrase: *Tunc respondens Petrus dixit ei* (Matt 19.27). The phrase *fidei munitus moenibus* is added by Juvenecus and immediately calls Matt 16.18 to mind: *Et ego dico tibi quia tu es Petrus et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam*, a Biblical verse that exalted Peter as the most important disciple and leader of the Church.⁹² Juvenecus' text runs as follows (*evang.* 3,271–87):

Sed *stabilis* Petrus: 'Tu Sancti filius, inquit,
Christus, *magnifico terras qui lumine conples*.'
Tum Dominus *forti* respondit talia Petro:
'Petre, beatus *eris*, nam talia pandere *certe*
275 *humanus* sanguis vel *terrae portio* corpus
haut *umquam* poterit. Genitoris *munera sola*
possunt tam validum fidei concedere robur.⁹³
Tu nomen Petri *digna uirtute* tueris.
Hac in mole mihi *saxique* in robore ponam
280 *semper mansuras aeternis moenibus aedes*.⁹⁴
Infernis domus haec non exsuperabile portis
Claustum perpetuo munitum robore habebit;
caelestisque tibi clauces permittere regni
est animus; terrisque *tuo* quae nexa relinques
285 *arbitrio*, caelo pariter nodata manebunt;
soluerit et *rursus tua* quae *sententia* terris,
haut aliter uenient caeli *sub sede* soluta.'⁹⁵

But firm Peter said: 'You, Christ, the son of the holy one, you fill the earth with your magnificent light.' Then the Lord answers to strong Peter as follows: 'Peter,

90 Cf. Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 350.

91 'Then Peter said, strengthened by the walls of faith.' Cf. Bauer (1999) for the reference to Matt 16.18 and *evang.* 3,278–80 (see also Knappitsch (1911–1912) 59). The PL, 19 a.l. (column 258), only has: "Ut u. 271, *Sed stabilis Petrus*."

92 Cf. Rimoldi (1955), p. 224 in particular, about the reception of the verse in the early Church.

93 See the commentary by Bauer (1999) 161 for the implication of the versification of vv. 276–7.

94 Note that the wordplay on *petra* is lost in Juvenecus' versification.

95 The words and phrases in italics do not have an equivalent in the Biblical text.

you will be blessed, for surely human blood nor part of a body of the earth can ever reveal this to you. The gifts of the Creator alone can grant such a powerful strength of faith. You are bearing the name Peter deservedly through your power. On this rock and on the strength of this boulder I will build my ever standing house with its eternal walls. This house, invincible for the infernal gates, will have a lock protected with eternal strength. It is my will to entrust to you the keys of the heavenly kingdom. What you will leave bound on earth, according to your judgment, will equally be tied in heaven. But what your judgment will have unbound on earth, will be likewise unbound in the seat of heaven.

This passage is the versification of Matt 16.16–9:

16. Respondens Simon Petrus dixit: 'Tu es Christus, filius Dei *uiui*.' 17. Respondens autem Iesus dixit ei: 'Beatus es, Simon *Bariona*, quia caro et sanguis non revelavit tibi, sed pater meus, *qui in caelis est*. 18. *Et ego dico tibi* tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam; et portae inferi non praeualebunt eius. 19. Et tibi dabo claves regni caelorum; et quaecumque ligaueris super terram, erunt ligata et in caelis; et quaecumque solueris super terram, erunt soluta et in caelis.'⁹⁶

Juvenius clearly wanted to emphasise this passage about Peter's position. *evang.* 1,422 already foreshadows it: *praesolidum Simonem, dignum cognomine Petri* (Matt 4.18: *Simonem qui dicitur Petrus*). Juvenius has added *praesolidum* and *dignum*, which shows his partiality for Peter more elaborately found in the passage cited above. Peter's strength and dignity are also mentioned throughout this passage (*stabilis*, v. 271; *forti*, v. 273; *tam validum fidei concedere robur*, v. 277; *digna uirtute*, v. 278) just as his connection with heavenly power (*certe*, 274, *umquam*, v. 276).⁹⁷ Likewise, Peter's own opinion is held in great esteem by Jesus in Juvenius' text (*tuo . . . arbitrio*, vv. 284–5; *tua sententia*, v. 286). Line 279 has rightly been called an "überbordende Periphrase" for the simple *petra* in Matthew.⁹⁸ Verse 280 is almost entirely invented by Juvenius (only the classical word *aedes* has an equivalent in the Biblical *ecclesiam meam*. This verse stresses the strength and everlastingness of the Church. *Exsuperabile* (v. 281) is

96 The words and phrases in italics are not versified by Juvenius.

97 Cf. Pietri (1976) 1517 about the Roman Church emphasising the strength of Peter and connecting it to the idea of his *auctoritas*.

98 Bauer (1999) 161. The exact wording of the line is disputed (see id. 161–2), but this does not influence my analysis.

also used in Vergil's *Georgica* 3,39, where it agrees with the *saxum* that Sisyphus has to roll up the hill. This could again be a reference to *saxi* in v. 279 and *petram* in the corresponding Bible text.⁹⁹ After Jesus' speech (*evang.* 3,274–95/ Matt 16.17–21), Peter's grief about the impending death of Jesus (predicted to the apostle in *evang.* 3,290–5, cf. Matt 16.21) is accentuated in vv. 296–9:

Tum Petrus magno percussus corda dolore.
'Absint, Christe, tuis,' inquit, 'tam tristia sanctis
monstra procul membris; nec fas est credere tantum,
nec tibi tam durus poterit contingere casus.'

Then Peter said, overcome by great grief in his heart: "May such sad terrors be away from your holy limbs; one should not believe something like that, nor that such a hard fate could reach you."

This text is the versification of Matt 16.22: *Et adsumens eum Petrus coepit increpare et dicere: 'Absit a te, propitius tibi, Domine, non erit istud.'* The direct discourse of Peter is spread out over three lines by Juvenecus. The word *increpare*, which could be interpreted as presumptuous, has been omitted.¹⁰⁰ The grief and reverence of Peter towards his master are emphasised by the addition *tam tristia sanctis* (v. 297).

In Juvenecus' next passage, about the Transfiguration (*evang.* 3,316–52, cf. Matt 17.1–9),¹⁰¹ Peter's reaction to the appearance of Moses and Elijah has been retained in vv. 325–9, but Peter's joy about the event has been turned into awe.¹⁰² The redundant second part of Matt 17.4 is changed into a more

99 Green (2006) 60.

100 Maybe the reproach is versified in the addition *nec fas est credere tantum* (v. 298). Cf. Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 351: "In Matteo 16,22 la reazione di Pietro è di protesta (*coepit increpare*); in questi versi (vv. 296–9, *rd*) l'esito è diverso: prevale un sentimento di dolore così profondo per gli avvenimenti annunciate da mettere in dubbio la profezia di Cristo."

101 I fail to see any connection between v. 323 and depictions of the Transfiguration (which are absent from early Christian art anyway, unless one interprets a scene on the Lipsanoteca from Brescia as such, see 2.1.3.4). The verse does not seem to go beyond the Biblical account, *pace* Bauer (1999) 174: "Der sprachliche Ausdruck erinnert an bildhafte Darstellungen der Verklärungsszene in der frühchristlichen Kunst: Christus flankiert von den beiden Assistenzfiguren Moses und Elias als Verkünder der messianischen Zeit (Dtn. 18.15; Mal. 3.23)."

102 See Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 354: "La spontanea reazione di Pietro, che in Matteo 17, 4 è di gioia immediata, è sostituita da una sorta di timore rispetto all'opportunità di essere presenti alla trasfigurazione, timore che egli manifesta anche a nome degli altri discepoli."

elaborate description of Peter's plan.¹⁰³ Verse 323 has been suggested to remind of visual representations of the Transfiguration,¹⁰⁴ but the text does not require this and such an image is only possibly (but disputedly) known from the lipsanoteca of Brescia before the sixth century.

In another well-known story of the gospels, Jesus walks on the water and Peter tries to do likewise (Matt 14.22–33). This passage is versified by Juvencus in *evang.* 3.93–126. The description of Peter's request is elaborated by Juvencus vis-à-vis the Biblical text.¹⁰⁵ His esteem for Jesus is expressed in words like *dig-natur* (v. 111) and *permitte* (v. 112). Juvencus emphasises the courage or zeal of Peter in the narrator text by the addition of *audet*: *Adnuit his Dominus; nauem mox linquere Petrus / audet (...)*.¹⁰⁶ In vv. 116–8 the intensity of the storm is described extensively by Juvencus. Peter not only fears the wind, but also the *tantarum ... miracula rerum* (v. 116). Juvencus' versification is psychologically more elaborate, but there is also another effect: the fear of Peter seems more justified since he has more reason to fear. The faith through which Peter could initially walk on the water is emphasised in line 119, which has no correspondence in the Gospel: *quae validum fidei gestabant aequora robur*.¹⁰⁷ Jesus' reprimand of Peter after he has saved him is indeed versified by Juvencus, but the direct discourse of the Bible (Matt 14.31: 'Modicae fidei, quare dubitasti?') is replaced by a less striking indirect discourse: *et dubitata fides uerbis mulcatur amaris*.¹⁰⁸

One of the most famous stories about Peter in the gospels is his denial of Christ (Matt 26.69–75, cf. *evang.* 4.570–85). The passage highlights the

103 Matt 17.4: "Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.'" is versified in vv. 325–9: *Respice, num nobis potius discedere longe, / an istic tantae spectacula cernere molis / conveniat; trino tamen hic tentoria vobis, / si iubeas, frondis faciam diversa paratu, singula sub noctem quae vos auleae receptent*. Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 355 highlight the alliterations in vv. 327 and 328: "(...) ancora alliterazioni sono adoperate per rendere l'entusiasmo e la concitazione di Pietro che vuole costruire tre tende (...)."

104 Bauer (1999) 174. His other reference is to an image from the sixth century.

105 Cf. Bauer (1999), who calls it a "bedeutsamer Eingriff in den Originaltext" (p. 105). And id. 106: "Freilich erzählt der Dichter nichts Neues, sondern leuchtet vielmehr den Moment argut aus, macht ihn plastisch faßbar, indem er den Zeitablauf verlangsamt, ja fast zer-dehnt, und ihn psychologisch vertieft."

106 *Evang.* 3.114–5: 'The Lord nods in agreement to this; Peter then dares to leave the ship (...).'

107 'The waves which bore the powerful strength of his faith.' For the 'psychological interpretation' of the scene, see Bauer (1999) 115: "Das ihn auch die um ihn geschehenden Wunder überwältigen, ist ein eigenständiger Zusatz des Dichters mit dem Versuch, dem Ganzen eine psychologische Dimension zu verleihen (...)."

108 *Evang.* 3.123: 'and his uncertain faith is reprimanded through bitter words.'

apostle's lack of courage. But Juvencus tries to attenuate the negative depiction of Peter. This is already visible in the preamble to the passage, where Peter follows Jesus to the Sanhedrin. Matt 26.58 reads: *Petrus autem sequebatur eum a longe usque in atrium principis sacerdotum, et ingressus intro sedebat cum ministris, ut uideret finem rei*. Juvencus versifies as follows (*evang.* 4,539–41):

At Petrus longe seruans uestigia solus
occulte maestus sedit cum plebe ministra
extremum operiens tanto sub turbine finem.

And Peter alone followed the footprints from far and secretly upset he sat down with a group of servants, waiting for the ultimate outcome of the great tumult.

Juvencus emphasises the fact that Peter is the only one (*solus*, v. 539) who followed Christ after his arrest, in spite of the seriousness of the situation (*tanto sub turbine*, v. 541). Moreover, he shows Peter's compassion with his master in the words *occulte maestus* (v. 540). His sorrow is also stressed in v. 570 (*Petrum . . . tristem*) and vv. 583–4 (*mentem Simonisque . . . tristem*).¹⁰⁹ In his versification of Matt 26.70 (*At ille negauit coram omnibus dicens: Nescio, quid dicis, neque intellego.*), *coram omnibus* has been omitted by Juvencus (*evang.* 4,573). In the passage where Peter's denial is announced by Christ (Matt 26.33–5), Juvencus elaborates on Jesus' prediction: Peter will be *pauidus* and he will tell *mendacia* (*evang.* 4,472). The apostle presents even more eager than in the Bible, saying that he will accept even a hard death (*duram mortem*, *evang.* 4,475). The additions first mentioned do not contribute to a positive image of Peter, but they are compensated by an adjective used by Christ himself: he calls the apostle *fortissime Petre* (*evang.* 4,473). Moreover, the denial of Peter was much discussed among Christians of the period: it was often explained as a symbol of ordinary Christians who sometimes doubted and could not believe, but were still to be given mercy by God (see 2.1.3.1.1).

Juvencus also versifies the story about the temple tax (Matt 17.24–7/*evang.* 3,381–95): the collectors ask Peter if his master pays the tax. Peter agrees, but Jesus points out that he should not be obliged to pay to enter the house of his own Father. Peter's affirming answer (which displeases Jesus) in direct discourse (Matt 17.25) has been left out in Juvencus' versification; by contrast,

109 In *evang.* 4,571 Peter is called *iuiuenis* and *comes* when he is addressed by one of the servants, who recognises him as a member of the group of disciples (Matt 26.69). It is the only instance of Peter being called by a more general term instead of his proper name.

his correct answer to Jesus is stressed: *Respondit Petrus: 'Alienos soluere certum est.'*¹¹⁰

There are almost no instances of passages where Juvenecus' versification results in a more negative depiction of Peter than in the Bible. In *evang.* 4,580–1 (Matt 26.74), however, Peter's denial is accentuated by the additions (*iurans*) *deuotis omnia uerbis* and *negando*. In *evang.* 4,497 the versification of Matt 26.40 (Jesus returns to the apostles for the first time after he has prayed in Gethsemane), the gravity of the situation is stressed by the addition *tantis sub casibus* in Jesus' words to Peter: even in such a serious situation, the apostles cannot stay awake. Peter is highlighted because he is explicitly mentioned. However, these exceptions may have been caused by Juvenecus' strife to dramatise his account, since in general Peter is clearly more positively depicted than a faithful rendering of the Bible urged Juvenecus to do.

1.2.3.2 Judas

Judas is mentioned eight times by Juvenecus, and always in book four, where his betrayal of Jesus is narrated. He is negatively characterised by the use of some adjectives: he is *amens* (*evang.* 4,422) and *furens* (4,514).¹¹¹ His fervour to sell Jesus out to his enemies is expressed in (*ad procures*) *cucurrit* (*evang.* 4,423). He commits a felony crime: Matt 26.16 (*Et exinde quaerebat opportunitatem, ut eum traderet eis*) is versified in *evang.* 4,427, where *sceleri* and *alto* are added: (...) *his Judas sceleri se subdidit alto*. When Judas meets Jesus in Gethsemane he greets him *dissimulans blanda cum uoce*.¹¹² The iniquity of his deed is emphasised by the contrast with Jesus' innocence and holiness: Juvenecus describes the kiss to Jesus as *attigit et labiis iusti uenerabilis ora*.¹¹³ He also stresses Judas' fear to be unmasked: when Jesus has announced that someone from the disciples will treat him, Judas asks if he means him (Matt 26.25). Juvenecus adds that Judas is *grauiter tum corda conscia pectora pressus*.¹¹⁴ This is not found in the Biblical account: the words *grauiter*... *pressus* seem to be slightly mitigating, but the verse also points to the fact that Judas was well aware of his crime.¹¹⁵

110 *Evang.* 3,387: 'Peter answers: "It is plain that the others have to pay."'

111 Cf. also the article about Judas in the RAC, s.v. Juvenecus (Thraede) 903–4.

112 *Evang.* 4,427: 'for this (sc. money) Judas gave in to a heavy crime'; *evang.* 4,517: 'pretending with a fawning voice'.

113 *Evang.* 4,518: 'And he touched with his lips the mouth of the innocent venerable.'

114 *Evang.* 4,443: 'And Judas, heavily dejected in his heart and with a conscious mind (...).'

115 Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 404, who not always sufficiently differentiate between elements of the negative characterization of Judas in the Bible and elements added by Juvenecus himself, emphasise Judas' consciousness: "Il v. 443 (...) costituisce un ulteriore incremento e ipotizza in Giuda una consapevolezza dell'entità del crimine."

In *evang.* 4,480 Jesus and the apostles are in Gethsemane and Judas leaves them. In Matthew, Judas' separation is not described. Since Juvenius tries to narrate his story in a logical way, he uses a remark from the Gospel of John about Judas leaving Jesus and the other disciples. But the poet shifts it to another moment in time, since according to John, Judas had left during the Last Supper (John 13.30). Maybe Juvenius thought that it would be more plausible to suppose that Judas secretly ran away while they were walking in the night.¹¹⁶ In the end, when Juvenius describes Judas' suicide (*evang.* 4,626–31) he calls him *infelix* (*evang.* 4,628).¹¹⁷ The adjective might have been interpreted by the reader as either 'miserable', indicating some pity, or 'inauspicious' or the like.¹¹⁸ He changes Judas' confession of his fault towards the priests from a direct into an indirect discourse (Matt 27.4/*evang.* 4,628). Juvenius also makes explicit that Judas was punished by adding *sibi sumere poenas* (*evang.* 4,630) to the Biblical account. He adds that the apostle was hung on a fig tree (*evang.* 4,631): the source for this remark is unknown: probably Juvenius referred to the tree from Genesis 3.7 and the original sin.

Juvenius is rather negative about Judas, as was to be expected: exegesis—e.g. about the nature of Judas and his companionship of Christ and the other apostles—did not bother him, although he did add the significant detail of the fig tree.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Juvenius apparently shows no awareness of the vexed problem of Judas' participation at the communion, for which see Sekulovski (2013), especially pp. 311–5.

¹¹⁷ In accordance with Scriptural order the story of Judas' suicide would come after *evang.* 4,589. By postponing the passage, Juvenius improves the chronological order, see RAC, s.v. Juvenius (Thraede) 904. But *infelix ueris damnans sua gesta querellis* is not the versification of *paenitentia ductus* (Matt 27.3) as Thraede has it (and it is not a versification "über Mt 27,3 (...) hinaus"), but of the direct discourse of Judas towards the priests in Matt 27.4: *'Peccauit, quod tradiderim sanguinem iustum'*. Hansson (1950) 105 writes *aegris* instead of *ueris*.

¹¹⁸ OLD s.v. 2–3. Cf. the discussion of the potential meanings and significance of the word in Raymond (2011) and see Stotz (2004) 20 for other references. Stotz does not refer to Juvenius.

¹¹⁹ Outspoken positive views on Judas' part in the story of the Passion are known from early Christian times, see e.g. Aug. *haer.* 18 about the Caiani. Juvenius' positive view on Pilate (*evang.* 4,590–625/Matt 27.11–26) does seem to have been influenced by apocryphal Christian literature. The poet makes him a background character and changes his words vis-à-vis the Bible. Juvenius prefers to oppose Christ to one grim enemy, the Jewish people, and does not want to blame the Roman government, which had only recently become Christian in his time, see Green (2006), especially p. 111.

1.2.3.3 Andrew, James, John, Philip, Nathanael, Matthew and Thomas
 The other disciples of Christ are given less attention than Peter. The names of Andrew, James (son of Alphaeus) and James are mentioned only once. In *evang.* 1.421–29 (Matt 4.18–22) Jesus first invites Andrew and Peter to be his apostles:

Praeteriensque uidet ponti per litora fratres,
 praesolidum Simonem, dignum cognomine Petri,
 Andreamque simul, sinuosa uolumina lini
 piscibus insidias disponere marmoris undis.
 425 'Nunc, inquit, pisces capitis maris aestibus altis
 sed me si libeat sectari, fortia uobis
 prouenient hominum praepulchra indagine lucra.'
 Olli confestim firmato pectore certi
 retibus abiectis pariter praecepta sequuntur.

Passing by, he sees the brothers on the coasts of the sea: very firm Simon, worth of the surname Peter, and also Andrew, disposing the winding coils of linen as traps for fishes in the waves of the sea. "Now", he said, "you get fishes from the high breakers at the mud flat of the sea,¹²⁰ but if you are willing to follow me, you will get the very beautiful, great profits of human beings through hunting." Immediately, they both throw the nets away and follow his precepts, resolute and with a firm heart.

The willingness of Andrew and Peter to follow Jesus is emphasised by *firmato pectore certi* (v. 428), which has no equivalent in the Gospel. Their free choice is emphasised by *sed me si libeat sectari* (v. 426). The direct discourse, which in Juvenecus' text is a sign of the importance of the passage, is strongly enlarged.¹²¹

Immediately after the calling of Peter and Andrew, James and John are also called by Jesus (*evang.* 1.430–4):

430 Post fratres Iacobum Iohannemque marinis
 insidias gregibus maculoso innectere textu
 ut uidit similemque dedit de litore uocem,

120 The phrase *capitis maris* (v. 425) seems not to be attested elsewhere in Latin poetry, nor in the Greek or Latin Bible. It maybe means the first part of the sea, nearby the coast, where you can still stand.

121 Canali, Santorelli et al. (2011) 269 emphasise the variation employed by Juvenecus vis-à-vis the Biblical text in vv. 421–34.

illi Zebedeum genitorem in puppe relinquunt
 ilico sectantes pulcherrima iussa salutis.

When he saw the brothers James and John connecting together traps with material full of stitches for the herds of the sea and simultaneously uttered his voice from the coast, they left their father Zebedee in the ship and immediately follow the very beautiful commands of salvation.

Here the most remarkable feature is the lack of additional remarks about James and John. Juvencus obviously did not want to add a phrase like *firmato pectore certi*. Probably, he just wanted to extol the faith of Peter (see 1.3.2.1 above): since the Bible describes the vocation of Andrew and Peter simultaneously, Juvencus' remark also applies to Peter's brother.

Although Juvencus often omits Jewish names of places and persons that are less important, he retains the name of Zebedee. By retaining this name, he can refer to James and John by the name of their father in the rest of the epic. Juvencus does this three times: *evang.* 3,319 (*Zebedeique duos . . . natos*); 3,590–2 (*Zebedei coniux . . . felices nati*); and 4,483 (*Zebedeique . . . natis*).¹²² Only in *evang.* 3,590–2 Juvencus varies on the Biblical text in his versification. In Matt 20.20–4 the mother of James and John comes to Jesus with her sons and asks sees for them in heaven. Jesus reproaches her for this presumptuous demand. The other disciples are grieved about the question. The opening verse (Matt 20.20) and Juvencus' versification are slightly different: *Tunc accessit ad eum mater filiorum Zebedei cum filiis suis adorans et petens aliquid ab eo* becomes *Hic tum Zebedei coniux submissa rogabat* (*evang.* 3,590).¹²³ Whereas in the gospel the brothers are explicitly mentioned (*cum filiis suis*), in Juvencus the demand seems to be a personal initiative of their mother, without involvement of their part.¹²⁴ Moreover, the question itself is more modest by the addition of *submissa*. The mother mentions her sons as *felices nati* (focalisation of the mother, who refers to the position of her sons in heaven) in her address to Jesus. The affirmative answer of the brothers to Jesus' question about their capability to drink the cup he has to drink (Matt 20.22/*evang.* 3,593–5) can be read in the gospel as well as in the epic. But the grief of the disciples, which in the gospel is explicitly linked to the question of the two apostles (Matt 20.24: *Et audientes decem contristati sunt de duobus fratribus*), is versified by Juvencus

122 This is again an expression of Juvencus' lack of interest in the individual apostles: he does not even call them by their name if a story is told in which they play a part.

123 'Then the wife of Zebedee modestly asked . . .'

124 The contrast with Mark 10.35 is even stronger: in that passage the apostles ask the question themselves.

in a more general way: *Exin discipulos dictis pro talibus omnes / conmotos tali sermonis mulcet honore* (*evang.* 3,600–1).¹²⁵ This versification seems to distract the attention from discord among the disciples.

The vocation of Matthew (*Matt* 9.9) is described in *evang.* 2,95–8. In a comparable way to the description of the vocation of Peter and Andrew, Juvencus accentuates the willingness of the disciple to follow Christ. The unpretentious Biblical words *Et surgens secutus est eum* are versified by *Nihil recusans / imperio Christi paret gaudetque secutus*, which is, except for *secutus*, an addition to the Biblical story.¹²⁶

Philip is mentioned three times in Juvencus' description of his vocation, which is intermingled with that of Nathanael. In Juvencus, the vocation of Nathanael (*evang.* 2,99–126), in which Philip plays an important role, is part of a larger passage (*evang.* 2,99–347) where the poet follows the Gospel of John instead of Matthew.¹²⁷ He therefore deliberately chooses to versify this part: this seems to be an indication for Juvencus considering Nathanael an important character and maybe even an apostle (note that his story follows on that of the vocation of some of the twelve). However, not a single poet mentions Nathanael, except for Juvencus.¹²⁸ The exact reason for the poet's mentioning of this enigmatic character remains unclear. In *evang.* 2,109 and 2,116 nothing concerning Philip has been changed in Juvencus' poem vis-à-vis the Bible, but in *evang.* 2,99–101 Juvencus again emphasises the faith of a disciple. First, Philip is called *comes* in 2,100. Line 2,101 is entirely added to the Biblical story: *Ille ubi cognovit Christi uiresque uiamque*.¹²⁹

Thomas is only mentioned in *evang.* 4,330, by his Greek surname *Didymus* ('twin').¹³⁰ Juvencus has omitted the name Thomas (cf. John 11.16), preferring the Greek name to the Aramaic in accordance with his general practice of

125 'After that, he soothes the disciples who are all upset by these words with the beauty of his discourse.'

126 *Evang.* 2,97–8: 'Without any objection, he obeys to Christ's order and happily follows him.' Cf. the comment of Santorelli (2005) 111: "La gioia particolare che si accompagna all'esecuzione di un ordine, non sentito evidentemente come un'imposizione e che è possibile solo se esiste una comunanza di intenti, è l'elemento in più che trasforma una passiva imitazione in una ripresa creativa, se pure all'interno di un'oggettiva differenza di situazioni." He emphasises the similarities with the vocation of companions of Aeneas.

127 See De Wit (1947) 5–6.

128 Cf. Holzmeister (1940) about Nathanael in the early Church.

129 'He then has acknowledged the life and powers of Christ.' See De Wit (1947) 36 for the translation of *uires* and *uiam*. Cf. also Santorelli (2005) 111 about the addition: "(...) un'aggiunta tesa a sottolineare gli effetti della conversione, che induce a fare proseliti (vv. 102 ss.)."

130 "(...) a rare intervention of an apostle other than Peter (...)", see Green (2006) 83.

adapting Biblical names to Greco-Roman culture. The direct discourse of Thomas largely reflects his words in the Biblical account, but v. 332 is almost entirely added: *totiens quod gens Iudaea minatur* ('since all the people of Judea threat us'). Juvencus abbreviated the story by putting the words uttered by all the disciples in John 11.8 ("But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?") in the mouth of Thomas. The line can be read both as emphasising Thomas' courage and his fatalism.

It is remarkable that Juvencus did not choose to versify the story of Thomas doubting the resurrection of Christ (John 20.24–9). This is the story in which Thomas figures most prominently in the New Testament. Although it is only described in the Gospel of John (like all other stories in which Thomas is highlighted) and Juvencus generally follows Matthew, the poet occasionally took his inspiration from the fourth gospel, for stories that are not in the Gospel of Matthew (e.g. the story of Lazarus). Moreover, the apostle Thomas was the most popular apostle after Peter and Paul in the apocryphal literature of the second and third century,¹³¹ which could have invited Juvencus to pay attention to Thomas at least as far as his self-defined concept of the Biblical epic allowed it. Again the lack of interest of Juvencus in individual apostles is striking.¹³² Theological concerns might have played a role too: maybe Juvencus thought it not suitable to refer to a passage in which a close follower of Christ openly doubts his resurrection. When Juvencus wrote his epic, Christianity was still the religion of a minority. Although his readers were Christians, hesitations about the relatively new faith were probably still present among many.

1.2.4 *Concluding Remarks*

In general, Juvencus faithfully versifies the Biblical account in his *Euangelia libri quattuor*. Nevertheless, close reading reveals many small variations on the Biblical text. These variations include several passages in which the apostles are depicted more positively than in the corresponding Biblical text.

Juvencus most often uses the word *discipuli* to designate the apostles, but other terms are also occasionally found. There seems to be no particular reason for the slight variation in designations (*comes*, *socii* etc.) for the apostles. Juvencus emphasises the apostles' willingness to follow Jesus: in this way, he emphasises the apostles' role as followers of Christ rather than as individual

¹³¹ Most (2005) 90.

¹³² Since the cult for Thomas probably arose in Syria, in Edessa, geographical distance might have played a role too: it is doubtful whether Juvencus was acquainted with the apocryphal traditions about Thomas.

characters in the Bible. The apostles are always mentioned in situations in which Jesus is the main character. Therefore, the way they are represented is always determined by words or acts of Christ.

Most apostles are therefore rarely mentioned as individuals. Bartholomew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddeus and Simon the Zealot (Cananeus) are never called by name at all. The omission of Jewish names is one of the characteristics of Juvencus' work. In contrast, the vocation of Nathanael is deliberately versified, which suggests that Juvencus considered him important, maybe even an apostle. Thomas' well-known doubtfulness is omitted, maybe because Juvencus thought that it would not be desirable to add this story of doubt in the Resurrection in a Christian epic in a time when many people were not Christian.

Only Judas and Peter receive significant attention. Judas is depicted in a negative way. The representation of Peter is remarkable: it is clearly more positive than it 'needs' to be given the Biblical model. Juvencus endows him with laudatory adjectives (something he almost never does with regards to the other individual apostles or the twelve): *praesolidus* (*evang.* 1,422), *stabilis* (*evang.* 3,271) *fortis* (*evang.* 3,273), and *fortissime* (*evang.* 4,473). They seem to be interrelated: the topic of strength finds a culmination in *evang.* 3,534: *Tum Petrus fidei munitus moenibus infit*. This addition of the poet is a reference to the famous passage in Matt 16.18, which was used by the Church of Rome to legitimise the primacy of its bishop.

The remarks that are made about Juvencus' treatment of the characters in his epic are more or less summarised by Green. His statement about the use of adjectives summarizes also the general opinion about Juvencus' versification technique in this respect: "They not only emphasise elements of the narrative or teaching but also serve as a major source of the intense unity of moral and emotional focus in the four books importing what Herzog called *Erbaulichkeit* or edification, and Kirsch *Psychologisierung*."¹³³ Nothing in this chapter contradicts this phrase. But the results from the analysis of the apostle representation add something to this statement: Juvencus deliberately depicted the apostles more positively than was done in his model, the Bible. Especially Peter is represented in a positive way: his faith and strength are consistently emphasised.

133 Green (2006) 42.

1.3 Proba

Faltonia Betitia Proba (320–370?) is one of the earliest Christian female authors.¹³⁴ Almost nothing is known about her life. She descended from an aristocratic family and was married to Clodius Celsinus Adelphius, prefect of Rome in 351.¹³⁵ Only one work of Proba is extant: a cento composed of Vergilian hexameters.¹³⁶ It is preceded by a poetic *prooemium* of 28 verses.

The cento is a versification of several passages from the Old and New Testament. In the Old Testament part (vv. 56–318), Proba versifies the story of the Creation, Adam and Eve and the Fall of man, Cain and Abel, and Noah. In the second part of the poem (vv. 346–688), Proba tells the stories of Jesus' birth, John the Baptist, the temptation in the wilderness, the Sermon on the Mount, the rich young man, Jesus walking upon the waves, the entry in Jerusalem, the cleansing of the temple, the Last Supper, the Passion of Christ, the Resurrection and the Ascension. Proba preferred this part of the poem: *maius opus moueo* (v. 334, 'I move to a more important work').¹³⁷ In her choice of topics Proba shows her concern for theology.¹³⁸

Apart from the prooemium, there are additional introductions to the parts versifying the Old and New Testament (vv. 29–55 and 333–45). The two parts are also separated by a postface (vv. 319–32). At the end of the poem, Proba has added a short epilogue (vv. 689–94).¹³⁹ Although Proba's poem should primarily be seen as belonging to the epic genre (see below), it also shows some

134 Clark & Hatch (1981) 6–7, who note that women might have written non-orthodox texts in an early stage of the development of Christian literature: generally, the position of women is supposed to have been more important in Christian movements outside the orthodox Church. We do not have any proof for this assumption. The oldest Christian text of a female writer that is extant is the *Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis* (around 200 AD). Proba had also written a poem about the battle between Constantius and Magnentius, which is now lost, see *Cento Probae* 3–8 and Fontaine (1981) 104.

135 Kirsch (1989) 118. Proba's family, the *gens* of the Petronii, was one of the first aristocratic families to convert to Christianity, see Fontaine (1981) 102. An alternative identification of the author of the cento with Anicia Faltonia Proba by Shanzer (1994) has now generally been rejected—see e.g. Cameron (2011) 327–37—although Flores (2008) 68 suggests a shared authorship (without convincing arguments).

136 According to Bažil (2009) 95 Juvenecus already used a method of “pseudo-centonisation”, but Proba's project resulted in a fairly different text.

137 Cf. Bažil (2009) 91–4 for the practice of reading a part of the Old Testament before one from the New in ancient liturgy. Text: Schenkl (1888), which is still the most recent critical edition of Proba's cento. Translations: Clark & Hatch (1981), adapted.

138 See Pollmann (2004) 88–9.

139 See Bažil (2009) 115–41 for an analysis of these passages and their similarities.

features of didactic poetry.¹⁴⁰ Many literary techniques frequent in Juvenicus' *Euangelia* recur in Proba's work, like *amplificatio*, *abbreviatio* and the preference for the elaboration of separate scenes.¹⁴¹ Proba attached great importance to the content of her poem. She only used Vergilian verses that do not seem to be contaminated by paganism: if necessary, she changed them in order to 'purify' them for Christian usage.¹⁴²

The *prooemium* contains many allusions to Vergil and other classical poets, but is not a cento proper: its hexameters are originally composed by Proba herself, which is unique for the genre of cento-writing.¹⁴³ The principal passage, however, is verse 23: *Vergilium cecinisse loquar pia munera Christi*: 'I will tell that Vergil has sung the sacred duties of Christ.' This is a clear reference to Juvenicus, who used the phrase *munera Christi* three times in his *Euangelia* (cf. also *Christi uitalia gesta*, *prooemium* 19).¹⁴⁴ But more significantly, line 23 reveals that Proba considers Vergil a pre-Christian prophet of God, who had told about Christ in the guise of pagan imagery. This was not a new idea, but Proba was the first poet to apply it.¹⁴⁵ Constantine in his *Oratio ad sanctorum coetum* (transmitted by Eusebius as an appendix to his *De uita Constantini*) already considered Vergil's fourth eclogue as a Christian text and interpreted it in a Christian way—without changing the story of the poem.¹⁴⁶ Proba, however, states that Vergil wrote a story of which the first layer (about Aeneas) was completely different from the hidden second one (about the Christian God), which he (also) wanted to propagate.

Proba found inspiration in the Holy Spirit (vv. 10–11 and 27), like Juvenicus, but she referred to the Muses too, by *Castalio... fonte* (v. 20, a spring on the Parnassus, dedicated to the Muses). Moreover, she also indicates differences with Juvenicus' approach: in verses 18–9, she alludes to Juvenicus' versification of Jesus' reproach of people looking for idle glory among men. By doing

140 Kirsch (1989) 125.

141 Id. 128–9.

142 Bažil (2009) 195–7. See id. 187–97 for a brief overview of Proba's versification technique.

143 Id. 115.

144 Concisely about the differences between Juvenicus and Proba: Bažil (2011).

145 Id. 119; 188 and McGill (2007) 176. Differently Pelttari (2014) 110–1. Cf. Gärtner (2004), discussing the novelty of Proba's poetical views on pp. 426–7. See Clark & Hatch (1981) 174–81 for the "Christianization of the Golden Age" and other Christians (the writers Lactantius and Municius Felix and the emperor Constantine, according to Eusebius) who considered Vergil as a poet inspired by the Christian God. The idea that Vergil contained hidden meanings was certainly not exclusively Christian, cf. e.g. Macr. *Sat.* 1.24.13.

146 Cf. Courcelle (1957), discussing the use of the fourth eclogue by Christian writers (including Proba).

so, Proba stipulates not to look for glory on earth. Juvenius, however, had expressed hope to gain earthly fame in lines 11–2 and 17–8 of his prooemium.¹⁴⁷

The genre of cento-writing arose in the second century AD. The cento of Hosidius Geta (*Medea*) is the oldest example of a cento that has remained. In total, eleven non-Christian and four Christian centos have been preserved. They date from the fourth to sixth century AD.¹⁴⁸ At the end of the fourth century, Ausonius was the first poet to formulate some rules for cento writing, in a letter added to his *Cento nuptialis*.¹⁴⁹ Some decades earlier, Proba was the first Christian centonist. Her poem might be placed in the tradition of exquisite literary forms, which flourished in the Hellenistic period and in Christian times had appeared in the work of Optatian Porphyry.¹⁵⁰ However, the cento could also be seen as a product of the ancient school curriculum, in which literature, and poetry in particular, held a pivotal place.¹⁵¹ Intertextuality, an essential element of the genre, played an important part in late antique literature, since there was an intellectual audience that had learnt many literary works (especially Vergil) by heart.¹⁵² Although centos have met severe criticism by modern critics, they are in fact some of the most outspoken examples of Roman literary culture: the principles of *imitatio* and *aemulatio* are applied as much as possible.¹⁵³

147 Bažil (2009) 122–3 (cf. p. 118).

148 Bažil (2009) 84. See Pollmann (2004) 80 for the differences between Christian and pagan centos.

149 Cf. Bažil (2009) 44 and Pollmann (2004) 83–7, emphasising that Ausonius did not follow his own rules. Proba—writing her cento before Ausonius formulated his instructions—apparently had different ideas about the prerequisites for the cento, see e.g. Bažil (2009) 189–90 and Herzog (1975) 39. The same is true for other centonists, see Ermini (1909) 103.

150 Fontaine (1981) 103. See *ibid.* for a remark about the supposed link between centos and late antique art: “Coïncidence instructive: ces centons virgiliens sont contemporains de l’*opus sectile* en fragments de marbres divers, de la mosaïque polychrome, des remplois de sculptures classiques ou du Haut Empire en de nouveaux ensembles architecturaux qui leur donnent un nouveau sens. Ainsi le centon de Proba doit-il être lu en quelque sorte « sous l’arc de Constantin » (...).” This idea was further developed by Roberts (1989).

151 See e.g. Marrou (1948^{7a}) 243–54 for the Greek world and Marrou (1948^{7b}) 41–4 for the adoption of the Greek school system by the Romans.

152 See for the cento as a typical late antique genre Formisano and Sogno (2010). For the growing interest of Christians in Vergil see e.g. Bažil (2009) 97–105 and Freund (1990).

153 Cf. Bažil (2009) 85: “Mais ce constat n’implique nullement qu’on doive exclure ces poèmes de la « véritable poésie », ou leur attribuer une place marginale dans la production littéraire à Rome. Bien au contraire: comme la technique imitative, exploitant la présence des textes antérieurs dans chaque oeuvre poétique nouvelle, est un procédé commun à la littérature romaine dans sa totalité, la seule différence consiste dans l’intensité d’utilisation

It has been suggested that Proba's cento was a reaction to the school law of 17 June 362 from the Roman emperor Julian.¹⁵⁴ However, this idea seems rather implausible. The school law was probably not enforced after Julian's reign, which already ended with his death on 26 or 27 June 363. Therefore, Proba only had one year to hear from the law, consider its consequences, come up with a new Christian genre and write her cento. Clearly, this is possible. However, the popularity of her cento seems to prove that it met a need independent of imperial legislation, in spite of the famous criticism of Jerome who characterised centos as *puerilia* and *circulatorum ludo similia*.¹⁵⁵ In many manuscripts, a letter in hexameters, probably written to the East-Roman emperor Arcadius (383–408) by a scribe, precedes the cento.¹⁵⁶ The scribe praises the cento with the phrase: *dignare Maronem mutatum in melius diuino agnoscere sensu*.¹⁵⁷ He recommends handing down the poem to Arcadius' son, Theodosius II (lines 13–15). Although this is a clear sign of the poem's didactic function in late antiquity, it does not necessarily imply that the poem was used as a school text.¹⁵⁸ Moreover, it is hard to see how it could have functioned as such for the great majority of young children, as it demands a lot from its readers in order to make sense of it. The text could only be appreciated by well-educated Christians who knew the Bible very well.

de cette technique dans des cas particuliers." For criticism on centos, see e.g. Opelt (1964) 106–7.

- 154 The hypothesis has most recently been worked out by Green (1995), but cf. e.g. already Clark & Hatch (1981) 6–7 and 98–9. See also Bažil (2009) 112 and Agosti (2001) 69.
- 155 Jerome, *ep.* LIII, sent to the poet Paulinus of Nola (see 1.11), 7: 'childish works' and 'similar to the play of street artists.' Jerome cites Proba's cento in this passage and indicates her with the not particularly flattering words *garrula anus*. But cf. Kirsch (1989) 136 (about Jerome, Isidore of Seville and the *Decretum Gelasianum*): "Diese Urteile sind deutlich ideologische, keine ästhetischen." Proba's cento became an instant success, which continued in the Middle Ages, cf. e.g. Graf (1997) 317 and Ermini (1909) 63. In the Renaissance, her poem still counted as a poetic model, see Bažil (2009) 21 and 23. The latter author emphasises her lack of success compared to Juvenecus in Bažil (2011) 312: "Il semble donc qu'avec la tentative de Proba, l'élan expérimental de la première poésie chrétienne en langue latine ait atteint sa limite."
- 156 See McGill (2007) for an analysis of the comments on the cento by Proba, Jerome and the scribe (for whom see pp. 173–7 in particular).
- 157 3–4: 'Deign to descry Maro, changed for the better with sacred meaning'.
- 158 Ermini (1909) 60–1. Plant (2004) 171 concludes with a well-chosen phrase: "While we cannot rule out a didactic objective, we should not assume that Proba composed her cento to teach children, despite its apparent later use for that purpose, just as we would not assume that that was the purpose Virgil imagined for his poetry." However, Wilson-Kastner (1981) 41 characterises the cento as an "invaluable educational work".

Maybe Proba wrote her cento for her own pleasure and recited it first to her (Christian) family: in the penultimate verse of her poem (v. 693), she addresses her husband (*o dulcis coniunx*) and summons him and her Christian brothers (*socii*, v. 692) not to postpone the celebration of Christian feasts.¹⁵⁹ She also refers to her own offspring in verse 694: (. . .) *hunc ipse teneto / o dulcis coniunx, et si pietate meremur, / hac casti maneant in religione nepotes*.¹⁶⁰

1.3.1 *The Apostles in the Cento Probae*

The cento form invites its (erudite) audience to find Vergil in a new poem. And even if the readers or listeners in Proba's own time were not actively looking for the Vergilian model, it was echoed throughout her poem:¹⁶¹ in the fourth century intellectuals were well versed in Vergil's oeuvre.¹⁶² The exclusive use of Vergilian material restricted Proba's vocabulary: for example, since Vergil did not use the word *apostolus*, she could not employ it. Proba tried to reveal the hidden way in which Vergil had expressed his Christian message. A certain loss of clarity was therefore inevitable.¹⁶³ Nevertheless, the presence of the apostles in the cento was felt in the fourth century: the anonymous copyist did refer to them in the hexametrical letter that preceded the cento. In an enumeration of topics dealt with in the cento, he names the *doctos discipulos* (vv. 8–9).¹⁶⁴

159 Clark & Hatch (1981) 126–7 and 193 suggest that Proba may directly refer to Ascension Day (she refers to the Ascension in vv. 682–8). However, Ascension was hardly celebrated as a feast day in this period, see LThK 5 s.v. Himmelfahrt III. Liturgisch (Franz).

160 Vv. 692–4: 'Keep this observance, o sweet husband, and if we should merit it through our piety, may our descendants remain pure in this religion.' Badini & Rizzi (2011) 205 also interpret this passage as referring to her own family.

161 Proba's care for acoustic effects in her poem suggests that she expected it to be read aloud, according to Bažil (2009) 188–9. Reading (poetry) aloud was standard practice in late antiquity, according to Cameron (2011) 485–6.

162 Cf. Bažil (2009) 97–105 and Fontaine (1986) 118 describing a member of the elite in the fourth century: "nourri aux vers de Virgile dès son enfance, et prompt à en saisir le moindre écho lexical."

163 Ermini (1909) 87: "La natura stessa del componimento letterario impediva si conseguisse una vera unità; e però manca un' idea o un fatto primario, intorno a cui tutta l'azione epica si raccolga, e non si scorge un vincolo logico tra le descrizioni e gli episodi che li faccia apparire parti di un'unica opera." Cf. id. 97.

164 Vv. 5–12: *Hic tibi mundi / principium formamque poli hominemque creatum / expediet limo, hic Christi proferet ortum, / insidias regis, magorum praemia, doctos / discipulos pelagique minas gressumque per aequor, / hic fractum famulare iugum uitamque reductam / unius crucis auxilio reditumque sepultae / mortis et ascensum pariter sua regna petentis*. 'Here will be set forth for you in verse the world's beginning, heaven's shape, and mankind made from clay. Here will be revealed Christ's birth and Herod's plots, the Magi's gifts, the disciples who were taught; also the perils of the sea, and the walk upon it; here slavery's

1.3.2 *The Apostles as a Group*

Proba mentions the apostles fourteen times as a group. She uses different Vergilian words to indicate them: *uiri* (four times), *socii* (four) and *comites* (twice) are the most frequent terms.¹⁶⁵ Given the importance of intertextuality in the work of Proba, I will present an overview of the original context of the relevant phrases (problematic passages are indicated by parentheses around the verse numbers).¹⁶⁶

<i>Cento</i>	Verse with reference to the apostles	<i>Aeneid</i>	Original context
<i>uiri</i>			
(464)	<i>Iura dabat legesque uiris</i>	1,507	Dido promulgates laws to her people.
(470)	<i>Pro se quisque, uiri</i>	5,501	Participants of the arrow contest at the funeral games for Anchises.
665	<i>'Praecipites uigilate; uiri'</i>	4,573	Aeneas to his men, about to depart from Africa.
668	<i>'Que uobis, que digna, uiri, pro laudibus istis'</i>	9,252	Aletes to Nisus and Euryalus who want to go to Aeneas and bring him back to the camp.
<i>socii</i>			
532	<i>Deducunt socii nauis</i>	3,71	The Trojans part from Thracia.
539	<i>At sociis subita gelidus formidine sanguis</i>	3,259	The Trojans are terrified by the words of Celano on the isle of the Harpies.
551	<i>Nudati socii</i>	3,282	The Trojans wrestling on Actium's coast.
557	<i>At media socios incedens naue per ipsos</i>	5,188	Mnestheus urges his men in the boot race at the funeral games for Anchises.

broken yoke, and life brought back by help of the one cross; also the return of the buried death, as well as the ascension of him who departed for his kingdom.' (translation: Clark & Hatch (1981), adapted). *Doctos* can of course also be translated as 'clever', 'learned'.

165 *Viri*: CP 464, 470, 665, 668; *socii*: 532, 539, 551, 557; *comites*: 638, 661–2. Several designations are used only once: *proceres*: 589; *numerus*: 590; *nautae*: 544; *pueri*: 592; *laeti*: 561; *beati*: 667.

166 See Bažil (2009) 281–313 for a scheme of the original context of all verses from the *Cento Probae*.

Table (cont.)

<i>Centō</i>	Verse with reference to the apostles	<i>Aeneid</i>	Original context
	comites		
638	<i>Diffugiunt comites et nocte teguntur opaca</i> ¹⁶⁷	4,123	Hunters accompanying Dido and Aeneas (Juno speaking).
(661–2)	<i>Atque hic ingentem comitum adfluxisse nouorum / inuenit admirans numerum</i>	2,796–7	Aeneas returns to his friends in Troy, having tried to catch the shade of Creusa.
	Other words		
544	<i>Qualia multa mari nautae patiuntur in alto</i>	7,200	Latinus speaks to the Trojans.
584	<i>Ipse inter primos</i>	2,479– 7,783– 12,579	Pyrrhus (Neoptolemus) breaks the doors of Priam's palace.—Turnus goes to battle against the Trojans.—Aeneas attacks Latinus' city.
589	<i>'Audite, o proceres,' ait, 'et spes discite uestras'</i>	3,103	Anchises speaks to the Trojans and tells them to return to their ancestral homeland.
590	<i>'Nemo ex hoc numero mihi non donatus abibit'</i>	5,305	Aeneas promises rewards to the participants of the foot race at the funeral games for Anchises.
592	<i>'Certa manent, pueri, et palmam mouet ordine nemo'</i>	5,349	Aeneas speaks to the participants of the footrace at the funeral games for Anchises.
561	<i>Et tandem laeti notae aduertuntur harenae</i>	5,34	The Trojans land on Sicily, after their departure from Africa.
667	<i>'o terque quaterque beati'</i>	1,94	Aeneas in a prayer to the fallen, when he and his comrades are overcome by a storm at sea.

167 In Vergil one reads *diffugient* and *teguntur*. Differences between Proba's and Vergil's text might be due to the fact that Proba had another edition of Vergil's text than we have nowadays, see Ermini (1909) 106. However, there are 113 instances of Proba's text differing from the modern text of Vergil's poems, which might also suggest a deliberate act of Proba, see Herzog (1975) 39–40.

Three cases are difficult to interpret precisely. Most commentators assume that the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7; Luke 6.17–49) was addressed to a large number of people, including the disciples, and not to the twelve alone.¹⁶⁸ This is also implied in Juvencus' versification (*evang.* 1,452–3). *Viri* in v. 464 and v. 470 therefore probably refers to a mixed group of people and is not similar to other designations in Proba for the apostles as a group on their own.¹⁶⁹

The content of vv. 661–2 seems to be an invention of Proba herself: when Jesus has risen, he returns to his apostles: 'And he was surprised to meet a very large number of disciples who had flocked to this place.'¹⁷⁰ Strictly speaking, this passage too does not refer to the twelve apostles. It has also been suggested that verse 458 is the first passage in which the apostles are mentioned. However, rather than the apostles' vocation (as has been proposed), the verse fits in the larger context of vv. 456–62: this passage rather seems to describe Jesus' tour through the country and the happiness of people impressed by his wonders and sermons.¹⁷¹

The first passage that is certainly about the apostles is that of vv. 531–61: it recounts the storm at sea (Matt 8.23–7) and Jesus walking on the waves (Matt 14.22–32; Mark 6.45–52; and John 6.16–21).¹⁷² In four cases, the apostles are addressed as *socii*.¹⁷³ In all five cases, the original context is about the Trojans, the comrades of Aeneas: Proba seems to compare Jesus to the leader of the

168 See e.g. Strecker (1984) 26–7, who also refers to Luke 7.1, a passage that supports the idea of a large audience.

169 The same goes of course for the reaction to Jesus' words in vv. 497 and 504. Maybe Proba herself also alludes to the question. Line 464 is derived from *Aen.* 1,507, where *uiris* indicates the people of Dido. Verse 470, however, is verse 5,501 in the *Aeneid*, where *uiri* designates men at the arrow contest (principally Aeneas' Trojans). In this way, the apostles and other people are indicated.

170 Maybe Proba's account is based on Luke 24.33 (mentioning that other people were with the apostles in Jerusalem). Badini & Rizzi (2011) 204 comment: "Ancora una volta la poetessa sottolinea la sua (Jesus', *rd*) regalità."

171 Herzog (1975) 35 considers the passage to denote the vocation and adds: "(...) zweifelsfrei legt Proba die vergilischen Elemente auf einen missionarisch-kirchengeschichtlichen Sinn hin aus (...)."

172 But in fact several Biblical scenes that are not explicitly discussed by Proba are alluded to in this passage, see Bažil (2009) 170–2. He also suggests (p. 171) that v. 534 refers to the vocation of the apostles: it resembles the fishing metaphore in Luke 5.1–11. However, in the context of vv. 531–61 it is primarily part of a description of the situation.

173 Vv. 532, 537, 551 and 559. In Juvencus' *evang.* 2,104, the versification of the same Biblical passage, they are indicated as *nesciae nautae*.

Trojans and his disciples to the Trojan companions of Vergil's hero.¹⁷⁴ The nature of the story Proba tried to tell undoubtedly contributed to her choice for passages in which Aeneas and his comrades play a role. However, it is improbable that the origin of the verses she used did not bother her: this assumption is buoyed by the fact that she had alternative verses at her disposal (Dido also had servants, for examples, like Turnus and others), but Proba clearly preferred phrases in which Aeneas and his companions were described. This gave an additional meaning to her use of the intertext of which she knew for sure that her audience would recognise it.

It has been pointed out that more than 70% of the textual elements in vv. 531–61 comes from book I, III and V of the *Aeneid*, which treat the principal journeys of Aeneas.¹⁷⁵ The original Vergilian circumstances in which the *socii* and *nautae* play a part are more or less similar to those of the apostles in the cento: v. 532 and *Aen.* 3,71 describe a departure, in v. 539 and *Aen.* 3,259 the men are terrified, v. 544 and *Aen.* 7,200 describe the difficult situation of the sailors, in v. 551 and *Aen.* 3,282 the men are rescued (in v. 551 the apostles see Jesus approaching, so they know they will be saved), and in v. 557 the helmsman is on board (Mnestheus and Christ respectively). The content of verses 531–44 is entirely added to the Biblical story by Proba.¹⁷⁶ The epic influence can also be noticed by the fact that the Biblical remark about contrary winds (Matt 14.24) was transformed by Proba into a storm scene, which is a recurring element in epic poetry.¹⁷⁷ *Nudati* in v. 551 probably refers to sailors stripped to the waist.¹⁷⁸

174 Cf. Herzog (1975) 35. This is a new development in poetry, not found in Juvenecus, cf. Roberts (2004) 52.

175 See Bažil (2009) 173–6. Id. 176 about the rather arbitrary use of one particular passage from book v: “Nous ne disposons encore d’aucune interprétation satisfaisante pour le rapport que Proba a établi entre ce passage du *Centon* et sa source virgilienne, mais il nous paraît probable que le caractère sacré des jeux, manifesté par exemple dans les signes prophétiques, ait pu jouer un rôle.” However, cf. the simpler explanation in Herzog (1975) 38: “Proba hat sich gleichsam in einem Passus festgesetzt und beutet ihn mnemotechnisch aus.”

176 See Pollmann (2004) 89–90, providing a more complete analysis of vv. 531–61 which does not differ from my own as far as the description of the apostles is concerned. She considers the addition of vv. 531–44 a concession to the pagan (or formerly pagan) part of Proba's readership. However, given the obscurity of Proba's verses for someone not knowing the Bible, a pagan readership does not seem a probable audience.

177 Bažil (2009) 171.

178 Cf. Hier. *Vita Pauli* 17 where Paulus is indicated by the word *nudus*, although he lived not literally without clothes (see *VP* 6).

The representation of the apostles is more positive than in the corresponding Biblical passage: until v. 544 the anxieties of the apostles are described. In v. 545 Jesus appears, walking on the waves. In the Bible, the disciples become even more afraid when they see Jesus, because they consider him to be a ghost (Matt 14.26). Proba, however, describes their joy when they immediately recognise their master (vv. 550–1): *agnoscunt longe regem dextramque potentem / nudati socii et magno clamore saluant.*¹⁷⁹ The bond between the twelve and their master is emphasised by *longe* and *magno*. It is also expressed by the fact that the disciples are consistently called *socii*, except for the comparison to sailors in v. 544. The famous passage about Peter coming to Jesus and losing faith half way has been left out: the group of the twelve apostles and the miracle of Christ were more important for Proba. The delight of the apostles about their salvation is stressed in line 561, where they are designated through the word *laeti*, which in the original context once more refers to Aeneas' companions.

Proba then versifies the entry in Jerusalem (vv. 562–5) and the cleansing of the temple (vv. 566–79). The disciples are not mentioned. They appear again in the story of the Last Supper, narrated in vv. 580–99, where they are mentioned four times, always in a direct discourse of Jesus. The story of the Last Supper in the Gospel of Matthew counts 13 verses (cf. Matt 26.17–30), but Proba versifies only two of them (Matt 26.20–1).¹⁸⁰ she refers to the moment of the day (v. 580 = Matt 26.20), the supper itself is described in vv. 581–8 (cf. Matt 26.20), Jesus' announcement of the betrayal is versified in vv. 589–99 (cf. Matt 20.21). Proba condenses the story in a considerable way, since she omits the reactions of the disciples to Jesus' words (cf. Matt 26.22) and the remaining parts of Christ's speech (cf. Matt 26.23–9). Embedded in an overtly classical context by traditional indications of time (vv. 580; 593; 600), Proba's story emphasises one of the main aspects of the Last Supper: the announcement of the betrayal.

179 'The seminude companions recognise their king and his mighty right hand from far and greet him with loud acclamations.' The observation was already made by Herzog (1975) 44: "Der ursprüngliche theologische Sinn (Kleingläubigkeit) weicht der Darstellung der hilfeheischenden *Verehrung*." It also recalls fourth century imperial ceremonial.

180 The Last Supper is also described in the other synoptic Gospels, in a more or less similar way. For the sake of convenience, Proba's account is compared directly to Matthew's version in this analysis. John's description of the Last Supper (John 13–7) does not begin with an indication of time; moreover, the emphasis is less on the Supper at the beginning of the passage, but more on the washing of the feet and the elaborate speech of Christ. Therefore, it seems most likely that Proba followed the synoptic version of the event in her versification.

In contrast to the storm scene, four different words are used to indicate the apostles: *primos*, *proceres*, *numero*, and *pueri*. *Primos* is used as a temporal indication ('He was among the first to . . .'), but the Vergilian background marks the importance attached to the bond between Jesus and the twelve. All original contexts of this passage refer to a hero among his fellow warriors. In the last three instances, the apostles are again placed on a par with Aeneas' companions (and Jesus with Aeneas, or, once, his father Anchises). *Proceres* seems to emphasise their special position (but it is counterbalanced by *pueri*).¹⁸¹ Verse 590 (*Nemo ex hoc numero mihi non donatus abibit*) is remarkable.¹⁸² Among the disciples, Judas is still present. Consequently, according to Proba, he will receive a reward with the other apostles. The positive role of Judas in the fulfillment of the divine will has initially been read also in the apocryphal Coptic Gospel of Judas, but this reading is disputed.¹⁸³ Even if the initial interpretation of this gospel would be correct, it seems more likely that Proba was influenced by the Biblical story about the reward for Judas' betrayal provided by the Pharisees (Matt 27.3), which he threw away before hanging himself (Matt 27.5), than by any obscure apocryphal text in another language. It is an ominous present compared to a position in heaven (cf. Matt 26.29) or rather the gift of the Holy Spirit promised to the disciples (John 14.16–8).¹⁸⁴ Although Proba does not explicitly tell this story, her audience undoubtedly knew it: verse 590 had a dark undertone.

In Proba's version of the story of the Passion proper, the apostles are never mentioned (not even Peter's denial). Proba affirms that they were present by referring to their departure (not explicitly mentioned in the Biblical version of the events) immediately after Jesus' death: *diffugiunt comites* (v. 638). They are not of primary interest for Proba in this scene, like the hunters in the Vergilian text used for v. 638, who accompany Dido and Aeneas before they fall in love, in compliance with the plan exposed by Juno in *Aen.* 4.123.¹⁸⁵

181 Ermini (1909) 94 criticised the use of *proceres*: "(...) perché il fatto (...) si rappresenta languido e monco (...) come il dir *proceres* gli umili discepoli, guasta il senso e toglie ogni convenienza".

182 'Nobody will go away from this group of mine without gift.'

183 For the Gospel of Judas see e.g. Pratscher (2010) 19–21, arguing for a rather positive role of Judas in this text; DeConinck (2007) *passim* and Painchaud (2011) for an opposite opinion.

184 Badini & Rizzi (2011) 197–8 interpret *donum* as a reference to the eucharist.

185 Herzog (1975) 22 suggests a link between vv. 600 (*Aen.* 4.129), 625 (*Aen.* 4.160) and 638 (*Aen.* 4.123): "es wird nicht der Inhalt der (völlig heterogenen) Vergilszene, sondern lediglich ihr Handlungsablauf evoziert."

After his resurrection, Jesus appears to the apostles and shows his wounds to them before he ascends to heaven (Mark 16.14–9; Luke 24.36–51; John 20.19–23). In the cento, it is not sure whether Proba is referring to the apostles alone (see the analysis of vv. 661–2 above): maybe this is the reason she refers to the neutral *uiri* in v. 665 and v. 668 (like in v. 464 and v. 470, the other two possible instances of the use of *uiri* for the apostles). In verse 665 (*timor omnis abesto*), Proba uses a phrase already cited by Juvenecus, in Jesus' apostrophe of the apostles after he walked towards them on the waves.¹⁸⁶

Proba clearly refers to the apostles in v. 667: *'o terque quaterque beati'*. Although the numbers three and four clearly refer to the twelve, there are only eleven apostles left, since Judas has hanged himself.¹⁸⁷ The intertext is particularly important here, because Christ shows himself very favourable to his nearest followers in his speech to them (vv. 663–76). Proba uses the speech, which has parallels in the Bible (Matt 28.18–20; Mark 16.15–8; John 20.21–3), but bears the traces of an original elaboration by the poetess, to emphasise the glory of Christ and the apostles. Jesus mentions their laudable deeds (*laudibus istis*, v. 668) and says that they have acted well (*laeti bene gestis ordine rebus*, v. 674). In the original context of vv. 665 and 667, Aeneas prays to his fallen comrades of the battle for Troy when his life is in danger (*Aen.* 1.91). This background only emphasises the miracle of Jesus' resurrection from death in the cento.

Verse 668 is the only place where the apostles are addressed with a phrase that in the Aeneid was not spoken by Aeneas (or his father), but the context is similar. An older, leading, man speaks to his younger friends.¹⁸⁸ The presence of the apostles at the Ascension of Jesus is not explicitly indicated, but the phrase *mortales uisus medio in sermone reliquit* (v. 684) points to the fact that Jesus is speaking to people whom the audience undoubtedly identified with the disciples.¹⁸⁹

186 Cf. 1.2.2.2.

187 Bienert (1999) 17 points to the same "miscalculation" in the apocryphal *Euangelium Petri* 14,59 and *Ascensio Isaiae* 3,17. The word δώδεκα is already used as a *termus technicus* in 1 Cor 15,5.

188 See *Aeneid* 9,246: *hic annis grauis atque animi maturus Aletes*. Aletes is speaking to Nisus (described as *acerrimus armis*, / *Hyrtacides, comitem Aeneae*, *Aen.* 9,176–7) and Euryalus (*et iuxta comes Euryalus, quo pulchrior alter* / *non fuit Aeneadum Troiana neque induit arma*, / *ora puer prima signans intonsa iuuenta*, *Aen.* 9,179–81).

189 'He left the human eyes in the middle of the conversation.' In the original context (*Aen.* 4,277, without *in*), Mercury is the subject of the sentence. He speaks to Aeneas summoning him to leave Africa, according to the wish of Jupiter.

In conclusion, Proba uses the *Aeneid* in her cento, since her story is essentially a story about human and divine characters. However, from the corpus of verses which forms the *Aeneid*, Proba deliberately connects Jesus and the apostles as a group to Aeneas and his companions. In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas and his companions are on a journey towards a new land, given by the gods: Proba maybe saw similarities with the mission given by Christ to the apostles to bring the gospel to new countries and new people (Matt 28.19) and the quest of Christians for a new heavenly kingdom (cf. e.g. Matt 25.34).

1.3.3 *Individual Apostles*

<i>Cento</i>	Verse with reference to the apostles	Vergilian context	Original context
533	<i>Hic alius latum funda transuerberat amnem</i> ¹⁹⁰	G. 1,141	The tasks of man after the golden age are described. Vv. 141–2 are about fishermen.
534	<i>Alta petens, pelagoque alius trahit umida lina</i>	G. 1,142	Cf. G. 1,141 above.
594	<i>Unus erit tantum</i>	A. 5,814	Poseidon promises to Venus that only one Trojan will die (the helmsman Palinurus) on the journey from Sicily to Latium.
642	<i>Tum senior tales referebat pectore voces</i>	A. 5,409	Entelus speaks, before he beats Dares in a wrestling match at the funeral games for Anchises.

¹⁹⁰ In Vergil one reads: *atque alius latum funda iam uerberat amnem*.

The first two instances (vv. 533–4, *alius*) are unspecified indications of people working as fishermen at sea. Proba's cento reflects the original Vergilian context.

In v. 594, Proba refers to Judas:

et lux cum primum terris se crastina reddet,
unus erit tantum in me exitiumque meorum,
dum paci medium se offert de corpore nostro.¹⁹¹

She cannot mention his name, which does not occur in Vergil's oeuvre: her designation seems to be impartial: *unus*. There are some remarkable similarities between the original context and Proba's. Both passages are dealing with one man who has to die, in order that other people are spared. In Vergil Aeneas and the other Trojans survive, but the helmsman Palinurus has to die, according to the will of Poseidon; in the cento Judas betrays Jesus to let him die and save mankind.¹⁹² In fact, Judas' task is depicted ambiguously here: first, he is characterised as a bad person, looking for the death of Jesus and his followers (*unus erit tantum in me exitiumque meorum*). The phrase *in me exitiumque meorum* is derived from *Aen.* 8,386, where Venus beseeches Vulcan to help the Trojans (the 'good guys' in the *Aeneid*!), since in her opinion everyone is against her and her people. Thereupon, Judas is presented as a mediator for peace (*paci medium se offert*), which confirms the foregoing verse. The passage as a whole may be part of a broader tradition of Judas' positive role.¹⁹³ Palinurus is an innocent man who has to die, because of the wrath of a god (Poseidon) against a hero (Aeneas, who is often put on a par with Jesus, see 1.3.2). He is sacrificed for the sake of other people, just like Judas: without him, Christ would not have died, i.e. he would not have been able to redeem people from the original sin.

Paci medium se offert in the *Aeneid* is said about Galaesus, who is an enemy of the Trojans, but a righteous one:

191 Vv. 593–5: 'And as soon as light gives itself back to earth tomorrow, there will be just one so much in for the ruin of me and my people, while he presents himself as a peace mediator regarding our body.'

192 Cf. Clark & Hatch (1981) 134–5 for Proba's interest in Palinurus.

193 In his tractise *De haeresibus*, Augustine mentions the *Caiani* who considered Judas as "something divine" (*diuinum aliquid, haer.* 18). See 1.3.2 for the Gospel of Judas. Cf. also Clark & Hatch (1981) 192: "Proba probably here refers to Judas' kiss which betrays Jesus (Matthew 26:48–50 and parallels); a second interpretation might be that the line describes Judas' repentance (Matthew 27:3–5 and parallels)." It seems unlikely that Proba allowed a positive connotation to Judas' representation "inconsapevolmente", as Badini & Rizzi (2011) 198 suggest.

(...) seniorque Galaesus,
 dum paci medium se offert, iustissimus unus
 qui fuit Ausoniisque olim ditissimus aruis:
 quinque greges illi balantum, quina redibant
 armenta, et terram centum vertebat aratris.¹⁹⁴

There might be a pun in the reference to Galaesus because of his being called *ditissimus*, since Judas betrayed Christ for thirty silver pieces (Matt 26.15). Again, Proba's choice for the intertext reveals an ambiguous attitude vis-à-vis Judas. The passage (vv. 593–5) is introduced by an indication of time (v. 593), which can be found in a very positive context in *Aeneid* 8,169–71:

Ergo et quam petitis iuncta est mihi foedere dextra,
 et lux cum primum terris se crastina reddet,
 auxilio laetos dimittam opibusque iuuabo.¹⁹⁵

Euander is speaking here about a treaty between him and Aeneas. Although Judas is the betrayer of Jesus (which can be seen in the phrase *in me exitiumque meorum*), the other Vergilian words in the passage have positive connotations; that suggests that Proba might have had ambivalent feelings regarding his intentions.¹⁹⁶

A considerable part of the content of verses 638–47 seem to have been invented by Proba herself. The reaction of the apostles to Jesus' death is not as explicitly described in the Bible as in the cento. The speech of an old man in vv. 642–7, however, is one of the few passages where the poetess goes beyond the Biblical content.¹⁹⁷ *senior* is probably meant to designate Peter: the apostle is presented as an older man, with the authority to speak to and on behalf of the eleven apostles.¹⁹⁸ Moreover, three speeches by Peter are quoted in

194 *Aen.* 7,535–9: '(...) and (...) old Galaesus, slain as he throws himself between to plead for peace—he who was of all men most righteous and once wealthiest in Ausonia's fields; for him five flocks bleated, five herds came back from pasture, and a hundred ploughs turned the soil.' Translations from the *Aeneid*: Fairclough & Gould (2000).

195 'Therefore, the hand you seek I join with you in league and, when first tomorrow's dawn revisits earth, I will send you hence cheered by an escort, and will aid you with our stores.'

196 *De corpore nostro* is not discussed, since this small phrase could be derived from different places in Vergil's oeuvre; the original meaning can hardly have been felt by the audience. *De corpore* is taken from *Geor.* 2,23 or *Aen.* 12,421; *nostro* is too small a part to take into account.

197 Cf. Herzog (1975) 35.

198 Ermini (1909) 95 does not mention Peter, but Kirsch (1989) 129, Clark & Hatch (1981) 192 and Badini & Rizzi (2011) 202–3 assume that *senior* refers to Peter. Clark and Hatch sug-

the beginning of Acts (1.16–22; 2.14–40; 3.12–26). Line 642 is the same as *Aen.* 5,409, in which Entelus—an old warrior but still strong—speaks before his match against Dares (Entelus wins) at the funeral games for Anchises. There does not seem to be a direct connection between Entelus and Peter.¹⁹⁹ Peter utters the despairity of all the apostles. Proba provides the story with a psychological dimension, like Juvenecus, who also often emphasises the emotions of characters more than the evangelists do.²⁰⁰ Although the original contexts of the phrases in the speech of Peter do not seem to have significant similarities, it should be noted that the central phrase *Quem sequimur? Quooue ire iubes ubi ponere sedes?* (v. 644) in *Aen.* 3,88 is spoken by Aeneas to Apollo, a god to whom Jesus often has been compared in late antiquity.

This is the only passage in the cento where Peter plays a part; even Jesus' words about Peter's central position in the Church are not versified by Proba.²⁰¹ This seems to be a deliberate choice, since Proba knows how to use the Vergilian text for her own purposes; it is not very plausible to assume that she eschewed Biblical stories because they were too difficult to tell in Vergilian vocabulary.²⁰² As a poet outside the official hierarchy of the Church, she apparently did not feel the need to consider ecclesiastical issues (cf. the ambiguous passage with Judas).²⁰³

1.3.4 Concluding Remarks

After Juvenecus had proved that Vergilian language could be used for Christian content, Proba went a step further. The very form of the cento implied that she put Biblical characters on a par with characters from a fictional-historical narrative. Apparently, Proba was confident enough to undertake such a project.

The specific genre of the cento forced Proba to ignore common words to designate the apostles (like *discipulus* or *apostolus*). She shows a preference for

gest that line 647 refers to the *quo uadis* legend, which would support the identification of *senior* with Peter. For the idea that Peter was an old man see Ficker (1887) 33, with reference to John 21.18.

199 However, if one apostle should be compared to a soldier, it would be Peter, cf. John 18.10.

200 For the grief of the apostles after the death of their master, see Mark 16.10. For their fear for non-Christian Jews, see John 20.19. Cf. also the Gospel of Peter 26–7.

201 Nor is Peter's attempt to walk on the waves or Peter's denial, extensively described by Juvenecus, see 1.2.3.1.

202 As has been suggested by Clark & Hatch (1981) 125.

203 But cf. Kirsch (1989) 137, who seems to suggest that Proba inadvertently left out the famous passage about Peter: "Angesichts der kirchenpolitischen Situation der Zeit ist der Verzicht auf die Darstellung des Primats Petri (Mt. 16,13–20) wenn auch vermutlich unbeabsichtigt, so doch immerhin auffällig."

the words *uiri* and *socii*. Due to the relatively short length of her poem, Proba had to be selective in her choice of scenes to versify.

The apostles do not appear in the poem before vv. 531–61 (Jesus walking on the waves). Thereafter, the apostles are mentioned in the story of the Last Supper, after Jesus' death and after his Resurrection, when he shows them his wounds. Some remarkable passages like the vocation of the apostles, the position of Peter in Church and the popular story of the denial of Peter are not mentioned. Proba clearly focuses on Jesus, and considers the apostles secondary characters.

The original Vergilian context always looms behind Proba's versification. The words she uses for the apostles are often originally referring to the companions of Aeneas. Besides aspects of intertextuality, Proba's depiction of the apostles in general is rather positive, especially in vv. 531–61 and 663–76.

Proba is principally interested in the twelve as a group of Jesus' closest followers. The individual apostles are hardly ever mentioned by Proba. The number of different Biblical stories in which an apostle plays an important role is restricted and the cento form made it difficult to point to minor characters who were not further elaborated upon. Moreover, Proba ignored the book of Acts of the apostles deliberately, which emphasises her focus on Christ.

The only two apostles who could have been recognised by the audience of Proba's poem are Judas and Peter. Although Judas is obviously presented as the betrayer of Christ, Proba also adds the rather positive phrase *paci medium se offert de corpore nostro* (v. 595). Moreover, the Vergilian context of the words used for the description of Judas is evidently positive. Maybe Proba was influenced by non-orthodox movements in late antique Christianity that considered Judas as a necessary link in God's plan for salvation. Peter is referred to as *senior*, which seems to reflect his status as leader of the apostles. His utterance in vv. 643–7 reflects the thoughts of the other apostles as well. Obviously, Proba saw an opportunity here to psychologise and 'epicise' the Biblical account.

1.4 The *Hymnum dicat turba fratrum* or *Hymnus de Christo*

Hilary of Poitiers (316–367/8) is known for his profound influence on the theological debate of his time. His commentary on Matthew is the oldest Latin Bible commentary that is still complete. Among his other works, he wrote a *Tractatus super psalmos* and his magnum opus *De trinitate*. He was a zealous opponent of Arianism, which brought him into conflict with emperor Constantius II (337–361). This dispute, and possibly other political issues,

caused his exile to Phrygia (356–360), where he became acquainted with the Greek hymnal tradition.²⁰⁴ After his exile, Hilary wrote his *Liber hymnorum*.

He was one of the first writers of Christian Latin hymns. Unfortunately, only three hymns of his *Liber hymnorum* are known nowadays. They were not discovered until 1885.²⁰⁵ The first hymn (*Ante saecula qui manes*) is written in a Horatian metre, the other two (*Fefellit saeuam uerbum factum te caro* and *Adae carnis gloriosa et caduci corporis*) are otherwise unattested combinations of different metres. Hymns one and two are abecedarians. The praise of God and his relationship with human beings are central to the hymns. In the short *prooemium* (two verses), Hilary refers to the Old Testament psalmist David as his inspiration.

The only hymn in which references to the apostles are found, is the *Hymnus de Christo*, more often called *Hymnum dicat turba fratrum*. The hymn has been transmitted on Hilary's name, but its authorship is disputed.²⁰⁶ It was passed down separately from the other hymns: the two oldest codices with this text are from the seventh century (*Codex Taurinensis* and *Codex Ambrosianus*, where it is called *Ymnum S. Hilarii de Christo*).²⁰⁷ The attribution to Hilary in the oldest manuscripts and the fact that the hymn is written in 74 trochaic tetrameters, a classical metre, seem to point to Hilary as the author.²⁰⁸

1.4.1 *The Apostles in the Hymnum dicat turba fratrum*

The apostles are indicated five times by Hilary.²⁰⁹ After an introductory part praising Christ (vv. 1–8), stories about his birth (vv. 11–20) and his miracles (vv. 21–8) are told. The wine miracle in Cana (vv. 25–6) and the miracle of the loaves and fishes (vv. 27–8) are explicitly mentioned, before the vocation of the apostles (vv. 29–30), which according to the Bible had taken place earlier.

204 Young, Ayres et al. (2004) 302.

205 Fontaine (1981) 83. His chapter about Hilary is one of the rare non-encyclopaedic texts devoted to Hilary's hymns.

206 The CSEL editor still attributed the work to Hilary, although it was listed as "hymnus dubius", see Feder (1966) LXXII. But Döpp & Geerlings (2002) 334 doubt Hilary's authorship. Von Albrecht (2003) 1290–2 and Herzog and Divjak (1989) 475–7 do not even mention the hymn among Hilary's oeuvre.

207 Feder (1966) LXXII–III.

208 I agree with Springer (1988) 57 in this respect. However, even if Hilary was not the author of the poem, it can in any case be dated to the late fourth century (see e.g. Norberg (1958) 75) and thus deserves its place in this book.

209 *Hymnum dicat turba fratrum* 30 (*duodecim uiros*); 31 (*unus, Iudas traditor*); 56 (*apostolis*); 57 (*beatis...fratribus*).

The vocation is referred to in a very general way, similar to e.g. Matt 10.1; however, the following note on Judas, a betrayer of Christ, might reflect Mark's description of the apostles' vocation, which ends with "Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him" (Mark 3.19). The reason might be that Jesus is the subject of the hymn: his miracles are recalled first. The reference to the apostles reads:

Turba ex omni discumbente iugem laudem pertulit.
Duodecim uiros probauit per quos uita discitur.

Ex quis unus inuenitur, Christi Iudas traditor;
instruuntur missi ab Anna proditoris osculo.²¹⁰

He carried continuous praise from the whole crowd, while they were reclining. He approved twelve men, through whom life is learnt. But one among them is Judas, the betrayer of Christ; people sent by Anna are guided by the kiss of the traitor.

The author first seems to connect the election of the apostles to the miracle of the loaves and fishes. The last two phrases reveal that the election is used as a transition to the story of the Passion (vv. 31–46). Judas is mentioned. The fact that he was one of the apostles is emphasised (*ex quis unus*, v. 31), just as the fact that he betrayed Jesus (*traditor*, v. 31, and *proditor*, v. 32). The unity of the apostles is stressed by the use of the words *duodecim uiros* (v. 30); their importance is emphasised by the phrase *probauit per quos uita discitur* (v. 30).²¹¹ With *uita* the Christian way of life is meant.²¹² The apostles are presented as instructors of Christians, through whom the latter can learn how to live. Since Judas is one of the twelve (whom Christ has approved, as is stressed by verse 30), he is probably seen as an example how not to live, in contrast with the preceding verse.

After the description of the Passion and the Resurrection (vv. 47–52), Jesus appears to the women (vv. 53–4). Thereafter, he shows himself to the apostles (vv. 55–8):

210 Vv. 29–32. Text: Feder (1966) 217–23. Translations of Hilary's work are my own, unless stated otherwise.

211 *Duodecim uiros... ex quis unus* also rephrases the Biblical passage of Matt 26.47. Cf. Hilary's commentary a.l. (*In Matth.* 31,1). The kiss is explained as a symbol of Christ's command "Love your enemies" (Luke 6.27).

212 Cf. Souter s.v. *uita*.

Seque a mortuis paterna suscitatum dextera
 tertia die redisse nuntiat apostolis.
 Mox uidetur a beatis, quos probauit, fratribus;
 quod redisset ambigentes, intrat clausis ianuis.²¹³

And he informs the apostles that he has returned on the third day, resurrected from the dead by the hand of his Father. Soon thereafter, he appeared to the blessed brothers, whom he approved; while they are discussing that he had returned, he enters, although the doors are closed.

After Commodianus, the word *apostolus* is used for the first time in Christian poetry by Hilary, since he is not bound to Vergilian vocabulary. He refers to the election described in verse 30 by the word *probauit*. The unity among the apostles is emphasised by the use of *fratribus* (v. 57). Their holiness is explicitly mentioned by *beatis* (v. 57). Maybe *ambigentes* (v. 58) refers to Luke 24.36 (“While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’”), but it could also be a deliberate invention by the author. After this passage, in vv. 59–64, Jesus is said to instruct the apostles, endowing them with the Holy Spirit and ordering them to baptise those believing in the Father and the Son. The hymn ends with the appeal to sing Christ’s glory before daylight (*ante lucem*: vv. 65, 70, 71).²¹⁴

1.4.2 Concluding Remarks

The apostles are mainly depicted as a group. They are teachers of the Christian way of life (*per quos uita discitur*, v. 30). Hilary considered the election of the apostles important enough to be mentioned. Maybe he felt that he could not leave the apostles out entirely. Moreover, the election functions as a narrative transition between the miracle of the loaves and fishes (vv. 27–8) and the Passion (vv. 31–46).

The only apostle to be explicitly mentioned by Hilary is Judas. It could be argued that he is the only apostle who cannot be ignored in a description of the life of Christ. The fact that Judas was one of the twelve is emphasised (*ex quis unus*, v. 31, cf. *unus erit tantum*, cento 594): Hilary may have wanted to remind his Christian audience of the danger of losing the right faith.

213 Vv. 55–8. This is not told in the Gospel of Matthew (but in John 20.19–26), so there are no parallels between these verses and Hilary’s commentary on Matthew’s account of the Resurrection.

214 The practice of singing hymns before daylight was already attested in Pliny, *epistula* 10.96.6, but could also refer to a monastic context (Hilary founded a monastery in Ligugé, according to Sulp. Sev. *Mart.* 7.1). This hymn would then refer to the *laudes*.

1.5 Damasus

Little is known about Damasus' life (305–384) before he became bishop of Rome (366–384). According to the *Liber Pontificalis* he was born in the same city, but his own assertions about his father (who also was a cleric) make this information suspicious.²¹⁵ Damasus' friendship with the aristocratic Filocalus and the pagan senator Praetextatus, but also the lavish building programme he undertook, suggest that he came from an aristocratic and wealthy family.²¹⁶

Damasus was a deacon under pope Liberius (352–366). For a while, he took the side of Felix, the antipope installed by Constantius II, after the emperor sent Liberius into exile in 355. However, when Liberius returned to Rome in 357, Damasus took his side. Only with bloodshed and imperial help could Damasus obtain the episcopate at the expense of his rival Ursinus in 366.²¹⁷ Although this unfortunate accession would pursue Damasus during his episcopate (supporters of Ursinus proceeded against Damasus in the period 370/1–374/5), he succeeded in strengthening the position of Rome as the most authoritative bishopric. The *Cunctos populos* edict promulgated by emperor Theodosius I in 380 firmly established Rome's primary position.

Apart from his famous epigrams, Damasus seems to have written other poetry that is now lost.²¹⁸ Nine prose writings, usually referred to as *epistulae*, are still extant. Damasus also contributed to other ecclesiastical documents, such as parts of the *Decretum Gelasianum* (from the synod in Rome in 382). Damasus also asked Jerome to make a new translation of the Bible. In his own writings, Damasus tried to find a suitable Latin idiom for Christian matters, e.g. for the liturgy, which was probably translated from Greek into Latin in his time.²¹⁹

Damasus is particularly well known for his propagation of the martyr cult in Rome.²²⁰ The promotion of this cult was part of his endeavour to position Rome as the most authoritative bishopric of the Christian world. By attaching his own epigrams on monuments that embellished the tombs of martyrs,

215 *Liber Pontificalis* 1,5,39; Damasus (epigram) 59; cf. Reutter (2009) 5–6. Biographical information about Damasus in this section is primarily based on Reutter's monograph.

216 Reutter (2009) 14.

217 For strife between Roman bishops and the attitude of the government in the middle of the fourth century see McLynn (2012) 305–12. For Felix and Liberius see e.g. Pietri (1986) 31–41 and Duffy (2006) 30–3 (pp. 33–40 for Damasus' episcopate).

218 See Hier. *uir. ill.* 103 and *ep.* 22,22 (*ad Eustochium*), referred to by Reutter (2009) 7–8.

219 Reutter (2009) 24–7.

220 Carletti (2008) 78: "Damaso è senza alcun dubbio il protagonista assoluto dello sviluppo del culto del martire." Cf. Lõx (2013) and Guyon (1995).

Damasus made his interference understood by the pilgrims visiting the relics and graves of Roman martyrs.²²¹ Priests and other educated people might have read these texts aloud or explained them so that illiterate pilgrims also came to know their content.²²² Almost all poems are written in hexameters.

The epigrams were engraved by the calligrapher Furius Dionysius Filocalus (*fl.* 370–383).²²³ His concern for the aesthetic aspect of his poetry combined with his concern regarding the content and his efforts to improve the accessibility of the churches and catacombs, deservedly gave Damasus the title “inventor of Christian public poetry”.²²⁴ It has been suggested that Damasus’ use of epigraphy might also be explained by his lack of financial means, which impeded him to change the architectural setting of all martyr graves where he wanted to be represented.²²⁵

Through the epigrams Damasus implicitly approved the *Depositio martyrum*, an already existing calendar of the days of saints: nearly all the saints from the *Depositio* were propagated by Damasus. He wanted to fill the “lacunas” in the official liturgical calendar.²²⁶ Damasus tried to bind the people to the city (and bishopric) of Rome through its martyrs and discovered—and invented—tombs for saints who were not even known to have existed anymore. The martyrs functioned as models of an exemplary Christian way of living for ordinary Christians. His activities all contributed to his aim to attract pilgrims from the entire Christian world.²²⁷

Although some Christian poetic inscriptions can be dated before his time, most of these older epigrams were barely recognisable as Christian, in contrast with the epigrams written by Damasus. However, the bishop also heavily relied on the (pagan) epigraphic tradition: Vergil’s influence is tangible in almost every epigram. The tradition of Christian poetry established by his

221 Diefenbach (2007) 31. Cf. Fontaine (1981) 113: “(…) la poésie épigraphique constitue pour Damase un puissant moyen de communication et de propagande” and Ságghy (2000), e.g. p. 276. See Carletti (2008) 82–3 and Guyon (1995) 167–8 for reconstructions of some tombs with Damasian inscriptions.

222 See e.g. Lønstrup (2010) 84 (note 294).

223 See Ferrua (1942) 21–35 and Reutter (2009) 12–4. Filocalus also (partly) wrote the *Chronographia* of 354, the first Roman calendar of saints.

224 Quote from Ságghy (2000) 277, who also compares Damasus’ epigrams to “monumental billboards” (p. 285).

225 Löx (2013) 79. Cf. already Ságghy (2000) 279.

226 Pietri (1986) 51–2.

227 Trout (2003) 527–8.

predecessors (especially Juvenius, but also Proba and Ambrose), paved the way for Damasus' project of Christian verse inscriptions.²²⁸

1.5.1 *The Apostles in Damasus' Epigrams*

Damasus mentions the apostles ten times in his epigrams, seven instances of which are references to individual apostles. Damasus was the first to use the term *apostolica sedes* frequently, which was mentioned at the council of 378 and most importantly in 382, when the claims of authority from the Church of Constantinople were rejected in favour of the claims of the Church of Rome.²²⁹ Two times, he uses the marked expression in his poetry: in 35^{1,4} (*In basilica Hippolyti*) and 57,4 (*Titulus archivorum*).²³⁰ In both cases Damasus sets himself and his function in the tradition of apostolic succession: in 35^{1,4} the word for bishop (*antistes*) precedes the words *sedis apostolicae*. In 57 Damasus refers to Vergilian verses on Aeneas to refer to himself.²³¹ Damasus' sanguinary election might have incited him to emphasise his position in a long and venerable tradition.²³²

1.5.2 *The Pair of Peter and Paul*

Peter and Paul are the only apostles who are mentioned by name in Damasus' epigrams.²³³ Epigram 20 is devoted to both apostles together. Damasus had a preference for pairs of martyrs: they fitted in his policy of creating unity.²³⁴ This was particularly important for Damasus, after the sanguinary strife with his rival Ursinus at his election.²³⁵ It is not a coincidence therefore, that he is the first poet to mention Peter and Paul together. In art the preference of rep-

228 Reutter (2009) 58–62 and Fontaine (1986) *passim*.

229 Huskinson (1982) 90, who erroneously states that Damasus was the first to use the phrase *apostolica sedes* (Libanius used it before him, see Pietri (1986) 58).

230 The expression also occurs in two *pseudodamasiana* (for which see 1.5.5): 72,5 and 92,1 in Ihm (1895). With regard to 35^{1,4} see Ferrua (1942) 174: "supplementum *apostolicae* Rossii certum uidetur." Ferrua's edition is used for the text of Damasus' epigrams, Ihm's edition for the *pseudodamasiana*. A recent edition, based on Ferrua and provided with a German translation and commentary (including many newly found references to pagan poetry), is Reutter (2009) 57–153.

231 Löh (2013) 141: he also suggests that Aeneas' journey (from the East to Rome) could be compared to Peter's (cf. Damasus *ep.* 20). He supposes that Damasus underlined the apostolic succession via this reference. To me this seems to be far-fetched.

232 Brändle (1992) 208.

233 For the *pseudodamasiana* see 1.5.5.

234 Ságghy (2000) 278. Cf. Brown (1981) 93–7 about concord in late antique Rome.

235 Ságghy (2000) 279–80.

resenting the two apostles as a pair already started around the middle of the fourth century.²³⁶ Epigram 20 reads as follows:

Hic habitasse prius sanctos cognoscere debes
nomina quisque Petri pariter Paulique requiris.
Discipulos Oriens misit, quod sponte fatemur;
sanguinis ob meritum Christumque per astra secuti
aetherios petiere sinus regnaque piorum:
Roma suos potius meruit defendere ciues.
Haec Damasus vestras referat noua sidera laudes.

You must realise that once the saints dwelt here, you, whoever you are, who asks for the names of Peter and Paul alike.²³⁷ The East sent these disciples, something we deliberately admit, and—having followed Christ beyond the stars because of the merit of their blood—they have reached the celestial heartlands and the realms of the pious: Rome has deserved more (*sc.: than other cities*) to claim them as its own citizens. These things Damasus wants to mention, new stars, as your praise.

This epigram was placed in the Basilica apostolorum, devoted to Peter and Paul, which is nowadays called San Sebastiano fuori le mura. According to a traditional view going back to Louis Duchesne, in 258 relics supposedly of Peter and Paul arrived at a place called *ad catacumbas*, where Constantine or Maxentius later built the Basilica apostolorum, at the Via Appia. They were put in the so-called Triclia (a covered space with a portico originally built by a pagan *collegium funerarium*) and remained there until the construction of the basilica.²³⁸ Recently, Eastman has emphasised that many elements of this

236 Cf. Lønstrup Dal Santo (2008) 35–8.

237 Carcopino (1952) 430–1 translates *nomina* by ‘relics’ in accordance with some epigraphical attestations. I do not agree with his objection against translating ‘names’ (“Ces noms sacrés affluaient naturellement à leurs lèvres”, p. 431), since a poet does not have to express himself in the most clear and literal way possible. Furthermore, Mohrmann (1954) 167–70 shows that the usage of *nomen* for a person is not uncommon. She considers Damasus’ phrase “une périphrase ‘poétique’ de *Petrum Paulumque*”.

238 Diefenbach (2007) 42. The date of 258 is based on a remark in the *Chronographia* 354 (MGH AA IX, 71: *III. kal. Iul. Petri in Catacumbas et Pauli Ostiense, Tusso et Basso consulibus*). The *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* mentions *ad catacumbas* as a place of veneration for both apostles, alongside their separate veneration in the basilicas named after them. Maybe this work was influenced by Damasus’ epigram. For another explanation of the divergence of the sources see Lønstrup Dal Santo (2008) 32. Cf. *Liber pontificalis, Vita Damasi* 3,4. For the Triclia see e.g. Jastrzębowska (2002).

theory are based on suppositions only and suggested that the place was somehow connected to the apostles without there having been actual relics at the site.²³⁹ However, if he is right the reason for the veneration of Peter and Paul *ad catacumbas* and not somewhere else in the catacombs remains obscure. Maybe it can be explained by the location of the site at an entrance way to the city.²⁴⁰

In any case, Damasus could refer to Peter and Paul in the Basilica apostolorum, although by the time he wrote his epigram their relics certainly were in the churches on the sites of the present San Pietro and San Paolo. The fact that Damasus noticed their *former* presence in a church reveals both the popularity of Peter and Paul and the desire of Damasus to claim these important apostles and to base Rome's authority on their Roman martyrdom.²⁴¹ The other epigrams written by Damasus were shown in the catacombs, but this one was exposed in a church, accessible for many people. Damasus wanted to make the apostolic presence in Rome as visible as possible.²⁴² It has been suggested that Damasus emphasised the apostles' *former* presence, because he wanted to transfer the cult of the apostles to their own basilicas at the Vatican and along the Via Ostiense. Damasus, like many other higher church officials, condemned the *refrigeria* (commemorative meals for the dead) which were very popular at the place *ad catacumbas*. Damasus therefore would have replaced the cult for Peter and Paul by that of Quirinus of Siscia.²⁴³ Although this hypothesis would explain the sudden arrival of Quirinus and fits in Prudentius' account about Quirinus (*perist.* 7) and Peter and Paul (the place *ad catacumbas* is not

239 Eastman (2011) 71–114, which is also an excellent introduction to the discussion about the veneration of the apostles *ad catacumbas*.

240 Cf. Bardy (1949) 234 about the site: “une invitation au recueillement adressée aux voyageurs qui arrivaient à Rome”.

241 Thacker (2012) puts into perspective the episcopal influence in fourth century Rome and emphasises the imperial involvement in the apostle cult: the most important Roman basilica's were built by Constantine—the basilica of Saint Peter—and the Theodosian house—the basilica of Saint Paul—, not by the bishops.

242 Damasus also established 29 June as a feast day for Peter and Paul, see Klein (2001) 337. On this day, one traditionally commemorated the apotheosis of Romulus, one of the founders of Rome. Although it has been doubted if this feast was still in use in Damasus' time (Lønstrup Dal Santo (2008) 19–30; cf. Zwierlein (2010²) 170 note 104), it probably was still known at least. 29 June was not a feast day commemorating the foundation of Rome, as is sometimes suggested, see Lønstrup Dal Santo (2008).

243 Fux (2003) 58 and 74–6. Hack (1997), who extensively discusses epigram 20, concludes that Damasus' real motives remain vague, but mentions the idea of Damasus' attempt to put an end to the *refrigeria*. However, these *refrigeria* were a common feature of Christian funerary culture and could also arise in a cult for Quirinus.

mentioned in *perist.* 12 in contrast with Ambrose's twelfth hymn), it seems strange that Damasus composed a poem honouring Peter and Paul—and let it engrave carefully by Filocalus—to emphasise that the cult for the two apostles should not be maintained anymore in the San Sebastiano. In reality, his epigram contributes to the memory of Peter and Paul until the present day. Moreover, no reference is made to the San Pietro and the *memoria* of Paul in the epigram, which is to be expected for a poem aiming at transferring the cult to these places.²⁴⁴

The poem mentions several important aspects of the apostles' representation. First, Peter and Paul are called saints (*sanctos*, v. 1). The verb *habitasse* is ambiguous: it could refer to the apostles having lived in Rome or even *ad catacumbas* or to the fact that their relics were stored there for a while, although the verb *habitare* normally is only used for living persons.²⁴⁵ The latter option seems most plausible: other evidence points to relics too and it better fits Damasus' emphasis on the martyrdom of the apostles.²⁴⁶ If the term was meant to be ambiguous, suggesting that both interpretations were apt, this would of course only contribute to the status of the apostles in the eyes of the pilgrims.²⁴⁷ In line three, the competition between the Eastern and the Western Church is evident: although Peter and Paul came from the East (which Damasus could not deny: *quod sponte fatemur*), they faced their martyrdom (*sanguinis ob meritum*) in Rome (vv. 4–5).²⁴⁸ Therefore, Rome could appropriately lay a claim on them: Peter and Paul were its citizens (*suos ciues*), since their bodies were

244 Zwierlein (2010²) 172 suggested that *prius* refers to Peter's and Paul's former presence on earth, in contrast with their sojourn in the San Sebastiano since their death. However, the emphatic *hic*, placed at the beginning of the verse, seems rather to refer to the place where the epigram was displayed.

245 Emphasised by Eastman (2011) 97–100.

246 See Carcopino (1952) 429–33 and Zeiller (1978). Cf. Pietri (1986) 57. Furthermore, no remains of houses have been attested archeologically, see Eastman (2011) 100. Prudentius mentions the Via Appia in his hymn for Peter and Paul (*perist.* 12), but does not refer to relics of the apostles. Ruyschaert (1966) 268 assumed that in Prudentius' time *hic habitasse* may have been interpreted as denoting the Roman citizenship of the two apostles. Luiselli (1986) 843–8 argues for a literal stay of the apostles *ad catacumbas*.

247 Cf. Hack (1997) 23 and Mohrmann (1954) 173.

248 Eastman (2011) 97–107 places the entire poem in this competition. *Hic* in his view refers to Rome as a whole, not to the place *ad catacumbas* specifically. Cf. Guarducci (1986) 817: the poem might have been directed to Eastern pilgrims coming to Rome via the Via Appia. See Bardy (1949) 235 (note 1) for a possible reference to a letter of Eastern clergy to the Roman bishop Julius. Not only the apostles came from the East, also the idea of Peter and Paul as a pair, see Gahbauer (2001). The cult of Peter and Paul was not propagated widely in Constantinople until the fifth century, see Lønstrup (2010) 162–207 cf. id. (2015) and (2012).

buried in the eternal city.²⁴⁹ They had followed Christ *per astra*: following Christ is a virtue that was already praised by Juvenius (*evang.* 2,562; 3,182; 3,259; 3,362 and 3,624) and is also present in Ambrose's poetry (hymn 12,7, see 1.6.2).²⁵⁰ The designation *nova sidera* for the two apostles became a common element in later Christian poetry, following on classical comparisons of e.g. Augustus with a star.²⁵¹ It might refer to the Dioscuri (who were also represented as stars, the constellation *Gemini*), the traditional pagan defenders of Rome. Peter and Paul are presented then as the new, Christian defenders of the city,²⁵² who ultimately were to be seen as the founders of a new, Christian, Rome.²⁵³ Moreover, they were sometimes depicted together with stars.²⁵⁴ However, the connection should not be exaggerated: "N'imaginons pas autre chose qu'un jeu un peu rhétorique chez ces chrétiens pétris de réminiscences classiques."²⁵⁵ The last verse reveals what was probably the most important aim of the poem: Peter and Paul were not only the stars of Rome, but also, or rather foremost, the stars of Damasus.

249 Brändle (1992) 208–9. Cf. Chadwick (1962) 314 and Pietri (1961) 297–8. See Sozomenos, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 111,8,5 for bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia, who refers to the Eastern provenance of Peter and Paul, while Rome 'only' had their graves. Damasus also referred to Rome as a new home for other martyrs, see 46,2–5 and 48,1–3 (Ferrua (1942) 143).

250 Cf. also Deproost (1990) 109 (note 293).

251 Sággy (1999) 532. Cf. e.g. Paul. Nol. c. 19,16–9 and Brown (1981) 73. Huskinson (1982) 89: "However, it is the placing by Damasus of an inscription proclaiming the *nova sidera* in the Basilica apostolorum that must be seen as the unmistakable act of propaganda which underlined the *concordia apostolorum*."

252 Diefenbach (2007) 308–309; Hack (1997) 25–6; Huskinson (1982) 110. Apart from the Dioscuri, Peter and Paul were also seen as the new Romulus and Remus, according to Fontaine (1981) 121; however, these brothers were often presented as examples of *discordia*, see e.g. Aug. *civ.* 15,5 and Lønstrup (2010) 108. Damasus' linking of the apostles with other mythical figures is not appreciated by Bockmuehl (2010) 115: "This is a kind of 'Starbucks' history—frothed, sweetened and flavoured as classical myth (...)." See also 2.2.2.1.3.

253 Pietri (1961) 314–22.

254 Example in Uggeri (2010) 64 (a golden medaillon with the portraits of Peter and Paul and two stars), see also 2.2.2.1.3. Cf. Brändle (1992) 213–17. This pictorial tradition was already hinted at by Ferrua (1942) 144 (who is not mentioned by Brändle): "*nova sidera seu lumina* (splendore doctrinae) et ornamenta (magnitudine gestorum) mundi, in quo non est necesse ut Damasus vetera sidera ceu Dioscuros paganorum cogitaverit. (...) cfr. titulum quem supra dixi ad hanc basilicam referri posse: *hic Petrus et Paulus mundi [nova] lumina praesunt*, ubi fortasse apostoli in absida picti stella insigni ornabantur, ut Cosma et Damianus in abside suae ecclesiae in foro (...)." Fontaine (1981) 121 also sees a reference to catasterism or deification of human beings as stars (cf. the Dioscuri again), *pace* Brown (1981) 1–4. The idea of Christ as stars can already be found in the Bible: Phil 2.15.

255 Pietri (1976) 1595–6.

This epigram is the first poem in which Peter and Paul are represented together and reflects the popularity of the *concordia* theme in Rome in the second half of the fourth century.²⁵⁶

1.5.3 *Peter*

Peter is mentioned (without Paul), in epigram four, which might originally have been visible in the Vatican baptistery. Archaeological traces of a baptistery from the time of Damasus have vanished, but several literary sources confirm its presence.²⁵⁷

Non haec humanibus opibus, non arte magistra

.....

sed prestante Petro cui tradita ianua caeli est,
antistes Christi composuit Damasus.

Una Petri sedes, unum uerumq. lauacrum.

Vincula nulla tenent . . .

Not with human support, nor taught by skills (...) but with the support of Peter, to whom the gate of heaven has been trusted over, the bishop of Christ, Damasus, has composed it. There is only one seat of Peter and there is only one true baptism. Not a single chain holds (...).²⁵⁸

The first line consists of a literal quotation of Verg. *Aen.* 12,427. In this verse the physician Iapix speaks to Aeneas. Unfortunately, it is unknown how many verses originally filled the gap between this verse and the following, but

²⁵⁶ See Huskinson (1982) *passim*. Huskinson's stress on the importance of the *concordia* theme in the representation of Peter and Paul has been criticised by Grig (2004) 217–20, but in my view the fact that other martyrs were also depicted as pairs does not dismiss the significance of this way of portraying Peter and Paul (who are by far more often represented as a pair on gold glasses—the primary objects of study in Grig's article—than others).

²⁵⁷ The place where the baptistery was situated is disputed. Brandt (2013) has recently argued that it was not in the basilica but in a separate building outside, as was usual for early Christian baptisteries. For the traditional view that the baptistery was in the transept of the basilica see e.g. Emminghaus (1962). Smith (1988) has an entirely different opinion and situates the baptistery on the Gianicolo hill. He equals it with the presumed source from which Processus and Martinianus were baptized by Peter (see 2.2.2.1.1).

²⁵⁸ 4. In *baptisterio Vaticano*. The last phrase is a reference to the concluding verses (*Aen.* 1,168–9) of the description of the safe harbour reached by Aeneas and his men in *Aen.* 1,159–69, see Rocca (1980) 81. Ihm (1895) a.l. and Huskinson (1982) 35 doubt the authenticity of this epigram.

probably only a few, since what is now the second verse would fit very well in the context evoked by the Vergilian citation: whereas Iapix tells Aeneas that a god performed the work (*Aen.* 12,429: *maior agit deus*), Damasus evokes the help of Peter (*ep.* 4,2: *prestante Petro*).²⁵⁹ The link between the apostolic see in Rome and the apostle Peter is made very clear in the following.

Damasus is obviously bearing Matt. 16.19 in mind. Instead of the keys, the gate of heaven is mentioned (cf. the gates of hell mentioned in Matt 16.18, but contrast the obscure *Oratio consulis Ausonii versibus rhopalicis* 32, discussed in 1.12). This seems to be a deliberate *variatio* on (and amplification of) the Biblical text. The bishop presents himself as the only successor of the apostle (*una Petri sedes*, v. 4). Moreover, Peter is said to be loyal to Damasus: this might reflect the opposition Damasus met during his episcopate. Damasus' function (*antistes*) is again (cf. 35^{1,4}) mentioned next to his bishopric (*una Petri sedes*).

1.5.4 Paul

The longest of Damasus' poems that has been transmitted is epigram 1. It is one of the two Damasian epigrams that have never been carved out in stone and probably preceded the epistles of Paul (translated by Jerome) as a preface.²⁶⁰ It has been called "la primera biografía poética del apóstol", a remark which can be extended to saints in general, since no real interest in them was shown so far in the extant Christian poetry.²⁶¹ The attribution to Damasus is confirmed by the manuscripts.²⁶² Given the uniqueness of the poem it is quoted in full:

Iamdudum Saulus procerum praecepta secutus,
cum domino patrias uellet praeponere leges,

259 Cf. Reutter (2009) 143 and Rocca (1980) 81. If vv. 2–4 were the concluding verses of the epigram, the first verse might rather refer to the help of Peter or God to the person to be baptised, without any connection to vv. 2–4.

260 Ferrua (1942) 83. Or the poem might have been written in order to function as inscription in the San Paolo, which was not yet built when the poem was written, see Lønstrup (2010) 128.

261 Veganzones (1986) 329.

262 If not, Ferrua (1942) would have rejected the attribution to Damasus, see p. 83: "Titulus, ut innuunt codices, videtur omnino compositus ut epistulis Paulinis, quasi praefatio, praeficeretur. Is prima facie nihil differt ab epigrammatis permultis quae ab hominibus mediae aetatis, expilatis antiquis, consarcinata esse constat, quare a genere dicendi pontificis saec. iv eum abhorrere omnino faterer, nisi testimonium concors tot codicum tamque vetustorum, Fuldensis in primis, prohiberet quominus Damaso abiudicarem."

- abnueret sanctos Christum laudasse prophetas,
 caedibus adsiduis cuperet discerpere plebem
 5 cum lacerat sanctae matris pia foedera caecus,
 post tenebras uerum meruit cognoscere lumen:

Saul had followed the precepts of the nobles for a long time: he preferred to give priority to the ancestral laws above the Lord, denied that the holy prophets had praised Christ and desired to destroy the (sc.: *Christian*) people through incessant murder. As a blind man, he violated the pious rules of the holy mother. After this (*period of*) darkness, he has deserved to know the true light.

In the first part of the poem (vv. 1–5), Saul's life is described until he is blinded (cf. Acts 9.3–8). His obedience to the Jewish laws and persecution of Christians are explicitly mentioned (cf. e.g. Phil 3.5–6 or Acts 9.1–2). In verse 3 Damasus presents a typological view on the Old Testament which can also be found in Paul's writings (e.g. 2 Cor 20). With *caecus* (v. 5) he refers both to Saul's spiritual blindness and to his temporarily physical blindness that succeeded it. Verses 5 and 6 are the turning point of the poem. Mary symbolises the whole Church.²⁶³

The poem continues with Paul's Christian biography:

- temptatus sensit posset quid gloria Christi.
 Auribus ut domini uocem lucemque recepit,
 composuit mores Christi praecepta secutus.
 10 Mutato placuit postquam de nomine Paulus,
 mira fides rerum, subito trans aethera uectus
 noscere promeruit possent quid praemia uitae:

When he had been touched, he perceived what the glory of Christ can do. When he noticed the voice of the Lord with his ears and perceived his light, he changed his conduct, following the precepts of Christ. After he favoured (*the name of*) 'Paul', when his name was changed, he was, it is hardly believable,²⁶⁴ suddenly carried beyond the air and has deserved to know the recompenses of life.

In vv. 7–12 Damasus refers to Saul's conversion and its implications. In v. 9 the initial situation has completely changed: the second part of v. 1 (*procerum praecepta secutus*) is repeated with a significant change: *Christi*

²⁶³ Cf. Ambr. *In Lucam* 7,5, see 1.6.4.

²⁶⁴ For the translation of *mira fides rerum*, see Weyman (1905) 24–5 (cf. Juvenius *evang.* 1,113).

praecepta secutus. Whereas the first part of the verse refers to Ovid (*composuit mores*, cf. *mores composuisse suos* in Ov. *Ars* 3,370), the last two words echo Verg. *G.* 4,448 (Aristaeus asks Proteus to reveal the will of the gods). This centonic verse emphasises that Saul enters the Greco-Roman, non-Jewish, world. In the next verse, Saul also receives the Greco-Roman name Paul. He is 'carried beyond the air' (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7,65), which refers to his vision of heaven described in 2 Cor 12.2–4 (elaborated upon in vv. 13–8).²⁶⁵ However, in 2 Corinthians it is said that someone else, whom Paul had heard of, had this experience. Paul even adds that he wants to praise this man, but not himself (2 Cor 12.5). This Biblical information was generally claimed to pertain to Paul.²⁶⁶

conscendit raptus martyr penetralia Christi,
 tertia lux caeli tenuit paradisus euntem;
 15 conloquiis domini fruitur, secreta reseruat,²⁶⁷
 gentibus ac populis iussus praedicere uera,
 profundum penetrare maris noctemque diemque
 uisere, cum magnum satis est uixisse latentem.
 Verbera, uincla, famem, lapides rabiemque ferarum,
 20 carceris inluuiem, uirgas, tormenta, catenas,
 naufragium, lacrimas, serpentis dira uenena,
 stigmata non timuit portare in corpore Christi;
 credentes docuit possent quo uincere mortem.

After being torn away, the martyr ascended to the sanctuary of Christ: the third light of heaven, which is paradise, held him while going. He enjoys conversations of the Lord, he keeps the secrets, he is ordered to preach the truth to heathens and Christians, to penetrate into the depth of the sea, and to watch there a night and a day, since it is enough for a great man to have lived covertly. He did not fear to bear whips, chains, famine, stones, and the ferocity of wild animals, the dirt of prison, strokes of the cane, torture, fetters, shipwreck, tears, the deadly poisons of a snake, nor to bear the stigmata of Christ in his body: he has taught believers how they can defeat death.

265 Veganzones (1986) has claimed that a triptych in the cubiculum of Leo in the Commodilla catacomb reflects three aspects of this passage: the *raptio* of Paul (cf. Dam. 1,13), his vision of and conversation with Christ (cf. 1,15) and the third heaven or paradise (cf. 1,14), see 2.1.3.2.

266 See references in Bray (1999) 301–3.

267 Cf. Juvencus *evang.* 1,304: *cordis secretra reseruat*.

Martyr can point to Paul witnessing heaven and the passage indeed refers to 2 Cor 12.2, but it seems unlikely that it was not meant to remind the reader of the martyrdom of Paul too.²⁶⁸ Damasus' interest in the martyrdom of Paul is attested in epigram 20 (1.5.2). Moreover, the context alluding to his ascension to heaven (*conscendit... penetralia Christi*) reminds of martyrdom too. Comparable to earlier statement in Christian poetry, Paul is also said to be a teacher (v. 16: *gentibus ac populis iussus praedicere uera* and v. 23: *credentes docuit possent quia uincere mortem*).²⁶⁹ Verse 15 emphasises Paul's special status.

Line 16, which recalls Paul's mission to tell the Christian truth to all people, is one of the few lines of the poem in which no reference to other texts (including Damasus' own texts) was detected.²⁷⁰ This might be a deliberate choice, to indicate that Christian truth is not to be found in pagan poetry (cf. *falsas fabulas* in ep. 2,3). This idea is also expressed in the concluding lines of the poem (vv. 24–6). Damasus considers Paul's stay in the depths of the sea (vv. 17–8) symbolic for his modesty, which is referred to in particular in v. 18 (*cum magnum satis est vixisse latentem*, cf. 2 Cor 12.5–9).²⁷¹

In vv. 19–22, Paul's own sufferings on earth (cf. 2 Cor 11.23–7) are described. Although the description is an enumeration of short references to aspects of hardships, some of them can be considered to refer to specific episodes in Paul's life. His imprisonment is mentioned in verses 19–20 (cf. Acts 23.35) and his lapidation by the inhabitants of Lystra (Acts 14.19) in verse 19 (*lapides*). *Rabiemque ferrarum* (v. 19) seems to refer to 1 Cor 15.32. The apocryphal story of Paul in Ephesus making a lion speak who was supposed to devour him might

268 See Schäfer (1932) 22: 2 Cor 12.2 describes a vision of Paul. Ferrua (1942) 85 considers *martyr* to mean witness here, referring to Acts 26.16 (with *testem* as the Latin translation of μαρτυρα), but is also aware of the other implication of the word: "Nisi forte haec ponuntur per anticipationem, secundum illud Hilarii *De Trin.* VI 20 (...)."

269 Cf. e.g. Hil. *Hymnum dicat turba fratrum* (about all apostles) 30; Commod. *Instr.* 2,15,1–2 and 2,24,2–5.

270 With verses 2, 3 and 8, see Reutter (2009) 68–9. Cf. id. p. 141 for references to Vergil's *Aeneid* and his *Georgics* in epigram 1 (the parallels for lines 9 and 15 seem more convincing to me than that of verse 7).

271 The line of thought of v. 18 is also expressed in Ov. *Tr.* 3,4a,25 (*Crede mihi, bene qui latuit bene uixit*), as Reutter (2009) 70 points out: the context of the *Tristia* refers to the discrepancy in the life of men who first live at a high and safe place—Elpenor before his fall (3,4a,19) and Daedalus in the air (v. 21)—and then die in lower regions—Elpenor becomes a shade in the Tartarus (v. 20) and Icarus falls in the sea (v. 21). This fits the context in Damasus' epigram: Paul's vision of higher (heavenly) realms (vv. 13–5) is followed by his predication on earth and his vision of the depths of the sea (vv. 16–8).

have played a role too, but seems less suitable in a poem which was meant to precede an edition of canonical writings.²⁷² Commodianus referred to this story—albeit in a more direct way—in *C.A.* 627–8. Verse 21 clearly refers to Paul's shipwreck and subsequent miracle on Malta, which is described in the canonical book of the Acts of the apostles (Acts 27.9–28.6) and was elaborated upon by Prudentius in his *c. Symm. praef.* 1, see 1.10.5). No story about Paul having *stigmata* (v. 22) is known, but it might be a general reference to Paul's martyrdom.

It is remarkable, however, that Paul's martyrdom is not mentioned in more detail, especially given Damasus' great interest in the cult of the martyrs. The lack of any reference to this event seems to support the idea that the epigram was used as a preface to canonical Pauline texts in which details which were not in the text that followed would have been inappropriate and less pertinent.

Dignus amore Dei uiuit per saecula magister.
 25 Versibus his breuiter, fateor, beatissime doctor,
 sancte, tuos Damasus uolui monstrare triumphos.

Worthy of the love of God, the master lives throughout the ages. In these verses, admittedly in a succinct way, most blessed teacher and saint, I, Damasus, wanted to show your triumphs.

Paul is called *magister* and *doctor* and praised as *beatissimus* and *sanctus*. In the concluding line, his triumph over his enemies (cf. vv. 19–21, a catalogue of sufferings endured, resembling that in 2 Cor 11.24–7) is emphasised. Damasus underlines his own bond with the apostle by the apostrophe in vv. 25–6 that closes the poem, in which he also mentions his own name (cf. many of his epigrams, e.g. no. 20).

1.5.5 *The Apostles in the pseudodamasiana*

Manuscripts include many poems that are presented as Damasan, but are unlikely to have been written by the Roman bishop. The earliest editions of Damasus' poems did probably not exist before the middle of the seventh century, when the first *itineraria* of Rome were composed and spread throughout

²⁷² See *Acta Pauli* 6. It is possible that the complete *Acta Pauli* or other legends that are now lost once contained a closer parallel to Damasus' remark. In the original context, 1 Cor 15.32 seems to have been meant rather metaphorically: εἰ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον ἐθνηριομάχησα ἐν Ἐφῆσῳ, τί μοι τὸ ὄφελος.

Europe.²⁷³ Poems not written by Damasus might have intruded the corpus of his work in an early stage.

Among the so-called *pseudodamasiana*, there are references to the *apostolica sedes*, Paul (two times) and Peter (once).²⁷⁴ Hymn 70, in iambic dimeters, is entirely devoted to Andrew (who is called *Andrea*, *Christi apostole* in verse 5). The hymn praises Andrew's name (vv. 1–8) and his cross (vv. 9–16). The exaltation of the cross might refer to the apocryphal *Acta Andreae* 54, in which Andrew delivers a speech towards the cross before he is crucified. It ends with a call for help by the singers of the hymn, directed to Andrew. This hymn seems to be of a later date, a suspicion that is supported by the fact that there is no single trace of Andrew playing a significant role in Christian poetry before this hymn.²⁷⁵ The poems 72 and 75 are not dated in Ihm's edition. Number 72 might be from Damasus' time. It could have been visible in the San Pietro and mentions the 'double honour of the apostolic see that Christ has enlarged and has given as a way to heaven' (5–6: *auxit apostolicae geminatum sedis honorem / Christus et ad caelos hanc dedit esse uiam*).²⁷⁶ Only two lines are left of hymn 75: *Hic positus caeli transcendit culmina Paulus, / cui debet totus quod Christo credidit orbis*.²⁷⁷ The special status of Paul (*cui debet totus . . . orbis*) is unambiguous here and linked to his universal mission to teach Christ in the whole world.

273 Ferrua (1942) 14. Some (fragments of) epigrams are still extant, but most of them are known from collections of inscriptions written down by pilgrims, see now Maskarinec (2015), also for the *Nachleben* of several Damasian epigrams.

274 *Apostolica sedes*: 72,5 and 92,1; Peter: 71,14 (*pastor . . . Petrus*); Paul: 74,7 and 75,1. The *pseudodamasiana* are edited in Ihm (1895), see xxiv: "In appendice (n. 63–107) dedi carmina spuria aliaque nonnulla, quae ad inlustranda Damasiana idonea visi sunt." A comparison between the last two editions of Damasus' work (Ihm (1895) and Ferrua (1942)) reveals many differences: Ihm distinguished many *pseudodamasiana*, which are numbers 63–107 in his edition. Ferrua, however, has often repudiated Ihm's attributions; those to Damasus as well as to the *pseudodamasiana*. My analysis is based on Ferrua's edition, cf. Reutter (2009) 63: "Die folgenden Ausführungen sollen sich auf die von Ferrua getroffene Auswahl stützen, weil damit eine sehr überzeugende Basis geschaffen ist, wobei m.E. aufgrund der strengen Auswahlkriterien eher davon ausgegangen werden kann, daß sich in dem so bestimmten pseudodamasianischen Material noch weitere echte Epigramme finden als umgekehrt."

275 See Ihm (1895) xxvi about hymn 70 and 71: "quo tempore compositi sint statui nequit, certe multo post Ambrosii tempora." Cf. poem 74 referring to Pope Leo I (440–461) and 92, an epitaph for pope Celestine I (422–432). Cf. Schanz (1914) 218 (§ 856).

276 Ihm (1895) 10 doubts the place of 72 in the San Pietro. The poem has also been dated later than in Damasus' time, see id. 77.

277 'Paul, who is lying here, has transcended the tops of the sky, to whom the whole world belongs, since he has believed in Christ.'

1.5.6 *Concluding Remarks*

For Damasus, poetry was part of his ecclesiastical politics: he claimed the Christian martyrs for the Church of Rome and aimed at binding the Roman citizens and pilgrims from other regions to the city and the bishopric of Rome. He almost invented the genre of the Christian epigram and chose to use the heroic metre of the hexameter, following his predecessors Juvenius and Proba. Damasus was the first Christian poet who wrote poetry meant to be visible in a non-scriptural context. Moreover, he showed great concern for the external appearance of his poetry, since he had Filocalus engrave them. He was also the first poet who combined his poetical ambitions with architectural projects.

The *concordia* of Peter and Paul, but the figure of Peter in particular, had a political significance for Damasus that is new in Christian poetry. With Damasus, Christian poetry certainly left the houses of the aristocracy and entered the life of large groups of Christians for the first time. Of course, most pilgrims could not read Damasus' epigrams, but priests serving in the martyr churches might sometimes have explained them to the illiterate. Moreover, at least the clergy and other people from the elite were able to read them.

Damasus also wrote the first poem entirely devoted to one apostle, namely Paul. Although Peter was more important in Damasus' strive for a special position of the Church of Rome (and its bishop), Paul was also dear to Damasus. Maybe this explains the text of *pseudodamasianum* 75, which exalts Paul in an unusually strong way. The mystic hymn for Andrew was probably not written by Damasus. It is a remarkable piece of a poem devoted to Andrew, and the only poem on an apostle other than Peter and Paul, beside Ambrose's hymn for the apostle John (hymn 6, see 1.6.4). Since the relics of Andrew were the first to come to Constantinople, Damasus' hymn to this apostle might reveal an attempt to claim the apostle for Rome (and himself).²⁷⁸

1.6 Ambrose

After Damasus, Ambrose (333/334 or 339–397, bishop of Milan in 374–397) was probably the Christian poet who was most actively involved in the politics of the fourth century.²⁷⁹ He is especially well known for his role in the

²⁷⁸ According to Delehay (1933) relics of Andrew in the West were in Fundi and Nola (p. 227, cf. 1.11) and in Milan (p. 338); does the hymn indicate that some relics were shown in Rome too? For relics transported to Constantinople see Paulinus c. 19, 317–64 and 1.11.7.

²⁷⁹ The two have known each other, and maybe even met at the council of Rome in 382, see Fontaine (1986) 127, who sees "la même structure eucologique d'une célébration verbale"

dispute about the replacement of the statue of Victory in the senate, advocated by Symmachus (a relative of Ambrose) and other pagan senators. Ambrose successfully opposed their initiative.²⁸⁰ In other cases, Ambrose did not even eschew to oppose the emperors themselves.²⁸¹ Two famous cases in this respect are his (fruitful) protest against Theodosius I for his intention to make Christians pay for the restoration of a synagogue in modern Raqqa (Syria, former Callinicum)—which they had destroyed—and his (granted) demand for penance of the emperor for the execution of Christians in Thessalonica after the murder of a military officer.

Ambrose's influence was due to his position as bishop of Milan, the city where the imperial court was situated in his days, but also to his aristocratic background.²⁸² After a thorough education (which brought Ambrose, among other things, a remarkable knowledge of Greek), he aspired to a civil career. In 374, however, when he was governor of Aemilia Liguria, he was persuaded to assume the episcopacy of Milan. He was the compromise candidate for Arian and orthodox communities that divided the city. Ambrose vainly tried to elude the episcopate. Soon he turned out to be fervently orthodox, in a city accustomed to Arian bishops, one of whom was Ambrose's predecessor Auxentius (355–374).²⁸³ In 386, Ambrose discovered the relics of Gervase and Protase. He vigorously promoted the martyr cult in Milan: *nequimus esse martyres, / sed repperimus martyres*.²⁸⁴ Ambrose also succeeded in obtaining relics from the apostles.²⁸⁵

in the poems of Damasus and Ambrose: this follows naturally from the similar topics in both oeuvres (celebration of martyrs and propagation of the orthodox faith, cf. id. 121).

280 But our view on the dispute has been distorted by Ambrose's focalisation who "blew up the issue out of all proportion", see Brown (2012) 103–8 (quotation from p. 104).

281 Ambrose also competed with the imperial court in other respects, see Cagianò de Azevedo (1963) for the arts (p. 62 and 65). In general, about all aspects of Ambrose's life, see Dassmann (2004) and McLynn (1994).

282 For which see e.g. Mazzarino (1989).

283 Cf. Döpp & Geerlings (2002) 19: "In überraschend zielstrebig und schneller Weise wandte er sich sofort nach seiner Bischofswahl einem neunizänischen Kurs kappadozischer Prägung zu, behielt allerdings den Klerus seines Vorgängers im Amt (...)." About Auxentius and Ambrose, see Sörries (1996).

284 Hymn 11,11–2: 'We cannot be martyrs, but we have found martyrs.' Hymn 11 describes the finding of Gervase's and Protase's relics. Translations of Ambrose are my own.

285 See e.g. Brown (1981) 36–7 and Dassmann (2004) 150–60, with nuances (esp. pp. 154–7). When Ambrose became bishop of Milan the city's most important relics were guarded in the Arian Church, see Sörries (1996) 41–2. Cf. McLynn (1994) 280 (note 116).

Ambrose was a prolific writer. Most of his works are of exegetical nature. The *Expositio euangelii secundum Lucam* is the only work devoted to the New Testament. The influence of Hilary is tangible in his hymns (especially with regards to theology), but the bishop of Poitiers was only one of Ambrose's many sources of inspiration.²⁸⁶ He wrote letters, published in ten books and many ethical, catechetical and doctrinal writings. Ambrose's authorship of the *Carmen de ternarii numeri excellentia* (15 hexameters about the number three) is disputed.²⁸⁷

His poetic inscriptions include an epitaph for his brother Satyrus and church inscriptions for the baptistery of the Church of Thecla and the Church of the Apostles (Basilica apostolorum, modern San Nazaro).²⁸⁸ His authorship of the 21 *tituli* for the Basilica Ambrosiana, or Basilica martyrum as it was initially called, is disputed, but it seems reasonable to assume that Ambrose wrote them. Given Ambrose's extensive building programme, he probably was also actively engaged in the decoration of ecclesiastical buildings.²⁸⁹ Although the original manuscript containing the *tituli* has been lost, a remark by the sixteenth century editor Juret (in the oldest extant printed edition with Ambrose's *tituli*) about its content should be trusted as long as there is no evidence to the

286 See e.g. Fontaine (1992) 18–19 (Hilary), 24–5 and p. 74 (Vergil and Horace). Fontaine points at four principal sources of the hymns: the poetic koinè of classical Latin, the philosophical prose of Plotinus and Porphyry, the translations of the Old and New Testament and (p. 73) “enfin la jeune, mais déjà riche tradition d’une langue poétique chrétienne, élégiaque et ovidienne chez Lactance, épique et d’abord virgilienne chez Juvencus et Proba, épigrammatique et composite chez Damase.” Cf. Franz (1994) 471: “In diesem Prozeß der Inkulturation erweist sich der Mailänder Bischof als ein nicht zu unterschätzender Brückenbauer zwischen Antike und Christentum.” Ambrose also used pagan mythology in his sermons, see Cameron (1970) 199.

287 See Weyman (1905) 43–6, text and commentary, for his denial of the authenticity of the poem see p. 43: “Das Machwerk ist m.E. des Ambrosius nicht würdig. Es ist vielmehr eine spätere (...) Spielerei (...).” Marksches (1995) 82: “Freilich wäre dieses Werk nun zeitgenössisch.” Cf. Mercati (1904) 20–3 who suggests another sequence of the verses, but cannot decide whether Ambrose is the author or not. Ausonius’ poem about the number three, the *Griphus ternarii numeri*, shows no significant similarities with the *Carmen de ternarii numeri excellentia*.

288 Epitaph: CE 1421/ILCV 2165; Thecla: CE 908/ILCV 1841; Basilica apostolorum: CE 906/ILCV 1800. For the churches cf. e.g. Sörries (1996) 69–86.

289 See e.g. Rizzi (1997) and Cagiano de Azevedo (1963). Katzenellenbogen (1947) 256 and 258 also assumes a direct influence of Ambrose on the programme of the so-called sarcophagus of Stilicho, which seems unlikely. Nevertheless, his preaching might have influenced the original choice of imagery on the sarcophagi of some Milanese people.

contrary.²⁹⁰ Unfortunately, the modern collection of Ambrose's *tituli* does not seem to be complete. There are 17 *tituli* about the Old Testament, but only four about the New Testament. By analogy with the *tituli* of Prudentius and the earliest extant complete cycle of pictures in a church (the Santa Maria Maggiore, app. 440), one would expect as many *tituli* for the Old as the New Testament. However, since we do not know in what way the *tituli* and accompanying pictures were exhibited, the original number of *tituli* remains unknown.²⁹¹

Ambrose's most famous poetic creations are his hymns, but his authorship of several of them is disputed. The oldest manuscripts date from the eighth century, but they contain many Milanese hymns (approximately 40) without any indication of the author. Moreover, due to the enormous success of Ambrose's hymns, apparently almost immediately after their publication, many people imitated them, which makes it very hard to separate the real Ambrosian hymns from the "forgeries".²⁹² Four hymns are generally accepted as authentic: *Aeterne rerum conditor* (1), *Iam surgit hora tertia* (3), *Deus creator omnium* (4) and *Intende, qui regis Israel* (5).²⁹³ They are mentioned in contemporary sources. Even if some of the hymns were not written by Ambrose himself,

290 This is the opinion of Gnllka (2009a) 123–5; he also convincingly refuses the dating in the 6th–9th century by Arnulf (1997) 111–3. Weyman (1905) 37–8 earlier defended the authenticity of the *tituli*. See for the problematic tradition of the *tituli* also Merkle (1896) 186–195, who was inclined to think that they are authentic or in any case written shortly after Ambrose, id. 201. Döpp & Geerlings (2002) 25 doubt Ambrose's authorship. Cagianò de Azevedo (1963) 70–1 mentions a passage from the work *De fide orthodoxa contra Arianos* (6,20/PL 17, p. 591) to support the idea that Ambrose knew a church with cycles of paintings from the Old and New Testament. However, the work is now attributed to Gregory of Elvira (see Döpp & Geerlings (2002) 291), and, even more importantly, the passage is about *parietes Novi et Veteris Testamenti* of which Christ is the *lapis angularis*: this passage should be interpreted metaphorically, building on the idea of Christ as cornerstone (Mark 12.10). The passage in *De fide* is part of a long list of designations for Christ.

291 Cf. Gnllka (2009a) 126. For Ambrose's *tituli* see also *Introduction* 4.2.2.1.

292 Fontaine (1992) 93. The word *ambrosianum* is already attested in the sixth century, but it is not clear what it means. Fontaine states that it refers to hymns that are considered to be of Ambrose, but Franz (1994) 18 considers it an indication of genre. Cf. Fontaine (1992) 29–30.

293 I use the text and numeration of Fontaine (1992). He discusses the authenticity of the fourteen hymns edited by him and his colleagues (which are the hymns that are most often mentioned as authentic) on pp. 97–102: 1,3,4,5 "authenticité incontestable"; 2,8,10,11 "très probablement écrit par Ambroise"; 6,12,14 "authenticité possible"; 7,9,13 "probablement pas d'Ambroise". Cf. Dassmann (2004) 147: "(...) vierzehn (sc.: *Hymnen*) gelten inzwischen mit großer Sicherheit als ambrosianisch." Duval (1997) convincingly argues for the authenticity of hymn 12; see also Gnllka (2010).

they date in all likelihood to the period contemporary to or immediately after Ambrose's life; they may have been written by Ambrose himself or by some of his pupils.²⁹⁴ The content of the other hymns is often the same as that which was dear to Ambrose, which is especially clear in the hymns about martyrs (e.g. 8: Agnes, 10: Victor, Nabor and Felix, 11: Protase and Gervase, 12: Peter and Paul, and 13: Laurentius).

Ambrose wrote his hymns to strengthen the orthodox faith of his parishioners:

Grande carmen istud est quo nihil potentius; quid enim potentius quam confessio trinitatis, quae cottidie totius populi ore celebratur? Certatim omnes student fidem fateri, patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum norunt uersibus praedicare. Facti sunt igitur omnes magistri, qui uix poterant esse discipuli.²⁹⁵

Great is this poetry and more powerful than anything else, for what could be more powerful than the confession of the Trinity, which is daily being hailed by the mouth of all the people? They rival one another in the confession of their faith, they know how to praise the Father, Son and Holy Ghost in verses. They have all become masters, whereas before they were hardly able to be pupils.²⁹⁶

His emphasis on the Trinity reflects Ambrose's strife against the Arians, who until the reign of Theodosius had a lot of influence even at the Christian imperial court. When Ambrose first wrote one or more hymns is disputed. A *testimonium* by Augustine has aroused much discussion. Augustine mentions the conflict between Ambrose and Justina (the mother of the young Valentinian II), because the latter demanded a church to celebrate an Arian Mass in the Easter week of 386. The bishop rejected her request and even entrenched himself and his followers in the Basilica Portiana, besieged by imperial troops: *Tunc hymni et psalmi ut canerentur secundum morem orientalium partium, ne populus maeroris taedio contabesceret, institutum est.*²⁹⁷ This sentence has

294 Fontaine (1992) 102.

295 *Ep.* 75A, 34. *Discipuli* is used as a neutral term, without reference to the most famous Christian *discipuli*, the apostles.

296 Translation: Den Boeft (1993) 77.

297 Aug. *Conf.* 9,7,15: 'Then it was decided that hymns and psalms should be sung in the Eastern manner to prevent people from weakening through aversion of their sorrow.' The very idea could also have been inspired by a remark in Luke emphasising the importance of psalms. The Gospel of Luke obviously had Ambrose's special interest, since it was the only New Testament text to which he devoted an exegetical commentary. Luke 24.44 reads: 'He said to them, 'This is what I told you while I was still with you: everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.'"

caused a lively debate about the exact moment of the institution of the hymns by Ambrose and the meaning of *secundum morem orientalium partium*. *Tunc* seems to mean 'in that period' (i.e. 385–386) rather than 'at that very moment'.²⁹⁸ By *secundum . . . partium*, Augustine might refer to the Eastern provenance of the hymnal tradition.²⁹⁹

The hymns consist of verse pairs, each of which forms a unity in style and content. Every hymn has eight strophes of four lines. They are written in iambic dimeters, a classical metre that was easily felt by the people, used to a Latin language that had become accentual.³⁰⁰ The performance situation of the hymns after their introduction is obscure. Maybe they were performed by the antiphonal singing of two choirs. It is clear, however, that all the parishioners in the church participated in singing them.³⁰¹ Ambrose succeeded, more than Hilary, in writing hymns that were comprehensible for all people: "Il n'oublie jamais que c'est son peuple qui chant, et non pas lui seul. Cette sorte d'abnégation pastorale lui fait éviter le maniérisme abstrus aussi bien que les excès d'une imagination qui commence alors à se donner libre cours dans les genres narratifs hagiographiques."³⁰² Ambrose is one of the early Christian poets who most convincingly succeeded in combining classical and Christian language with Christian content.³⁰³

1.6.1 *The Apostles in (pseudo-)Ambrosian Poetry*

Two of Ambrose's hymns are entirely devoted to the apostles: hymn 12 (*Apostolorum passio*, on Peter and Paul) and 6 (*Amore Christi nobilis*, on John). Moreover, the denial of Peter is a central theme in the first hymn (*Aeterne rerum conditor*). The other apostles are not mentioned by name. Ambrose

298 See Franz (1994) 5–11, where she also discusses two other important *testimonia* (Ambrose's *Sermo contra Auxentium*, maybe held by Ambrose during the siege of the Basilica portiana, and Paulin of Milan's *Vita Ambrosii*, published in 422).

299 Fontaine (1992) 18. Cf. Franz (1994) 8: "Es werden *hymni secundum morem orientalium partium* eingeführt, d.h. nichtbiblische, poetische Gesangsstücke; weiterhin werden *psalmi secundum morem orientalium partium* eingeführt, d.h. nicht der Psalmengesang an sich, sondern der Psalmengesang *nach der Weise der Ostkirchen*. Möglicherweise sind damit nichtbiblische, poetische Kehrverse gemeint, die nun als neue Elemente der Volksbeteiligung den Psalmen beigegeben werden."

300 Cf. Mazzarino (1989) 98–101.

301 Franz (1994) 17; Fontaine (1992) 20–22.

302 Fontaine (1992) 81. Nevertheless, the hymns also challenged an intellectual audience, see Fontaine (1981) 131. See Norberg (1974) 139–44 for the reason of the more common use of Ambrose's hymns than those of Prudentius and Hilary.

303 Cf. e.g. Mohrmann (1947) 296.

never mentions the apostles as a group of twelve followers of Christ in his poetry.³⁰⁴

1.6.2 *The Pair of Peter and Paul*

Hymn 13 (*Aeterna Christi munera*) is devoted to the popular Roman martyr Lawrence of Rome. In this hymn, Ambrose also refers to Peter and Paul: *Apostolorum supparem / Laurentium archidiaconum / pari corona martyrum / Romana sacrauit fides*.³⁰⁵ This opening stanza clearly refers to hymn 12 (*Apostolorum passio*) devoted to Peter and Paul: not only through the first word but also through *supparem* and *pari*—which reminds of *impar* in 12,10. Lawrence is ‘almost equal’ to the apostles, which indicates both his status and that of Peter and Paul. The presence of Peter and Paul in a hymn devoted to Lawrence is not surprising: Peter, Paul and Lawrence were the most popular saints of Rome. Lawrence first of all was a Roman saint and maybe less well-known in Milan (it might have been Ambrose who first propagated his cult outside Rome),³⁰⁶ but Peter and Paul were venerated throughout the Christian world and Ambrose’s Milanese audience knew that their relics were in Milan. Moreover, the feast of Peter and Paul was celebrated in Milan from 378 onwards.³⁰⁷ The three martyrs are found together in an inscription from the beginning of the fifth century and in a sermon of Augustine too.³⁰⁸ Moreover, the same group of martyrs can be found together in the second hymn (devoted to Lawrence) of Prudentius’ *Peristephanon*. It is not clear whether Prudentius imitated Ambrose or vice versa.³⁰⁹

In 386 at the latest, Ambrose consecrated a basilica to the apostles (the Basilica apostolorum, now S. Nazaro). Ambrose mentions the apostles in an epigram in the Basilica, indicating the name of the church: *Condidit Ambrosius templum Dominoque sacrauit / nomine apostolico munere reliquiis*.³¹⁰

304 In his prose-writings Ambrose often mentions them.

305 ‘The Roman faith has consecrated Lawrence, the archdeacon, almost equal to the apostles, with a crown equal to that of martyrs.’

306 Cf. Lavarenne (1951) 28. Moreover, Ambrose seems to have been the first to mention the passion of Lawrence.

307 Löx (2013) 100.

308 De Montgolfier & Nauroy (1992) 554 and 564–5 (for Augustine see *Serm.* 296: *In nat. apost. Petri et Pauli* 2,5).

309 De Montgolfier & Nauroy (1992) 555–6.

310 CLE 906: ‘Ambrose has founded the church and dedicated it to God with an apostolic name, a gift and relics.’ See Sartori (1998). Note the name of Ambrose in the first line, which seems to reflect Damasus’ custom of naming himself in his epigrams. See also Löx (2013) 97–101 for the relics in the Basilica apostolorum.

Relics of the apostles John, Andrew, Thomas and the martyr Nazarius were added to the reliquary of the church.³¹¹ Ambrose's sympathy for the two most important apostles can be seen in hymn 12. Although Peter and Paul were first of all martyrs of the Roman Church, Ambrose's interest in them was sincere. He never challenged Rome's aspiration to be the most authoritative Church.³¹² Hymn 12 is written on the occasion of the saint's day of Peter and Paul on 29 June. Its date is hard to establish. Even the fact that three places of cult are mentioned (v. 27: San Pietro, San Paolo and the Basilica apostolorum must be meant), is not in itself a decisive argument to date the hymn before Prudentius' *Peristephanon* 12. This poem, written in honour of Peter and Paul on the same occasion, mentions only two cult places.³¹³

Although Ambrose's hymn is devoted to the two main apostles together, Peter is subject of the central stanzas of the hymn (4, 5 and 6), while only in one stanza (3) emphasis is laid upon Paul.³¹⁴ The first and last pair of strophes refers to both apostles.

The apostles are praised for having triumphed through their death (v. 3: *Petri triumphum nobilem*; v. 6: *cruor triumphalis necis*) and having followed God as their guide (v. 7: *deum secutos praesulem*). This motive of following God recalls Damasus' epigram 20,4 (*per astra secuti*, about Peter and Paul) and Juvenecus' preference for the participle *sectantes* in combination with the word *discipuli* (evang. 2,562; 3,182; 3,259; 3,362 and 3,624). The two apostles are together designated as *apostoli* (v. 1), *uiri* (v. 5) and (*sacri*) *martyres* (v. 28). Peter is called *apostolus* in v. 9, and Paul is called *magister* (12,32; cf. e.g. Damasus *ep.* 1,24, discussed in 1.5.4). Moreover, for the first time since Juvenecus' *Euangeliorum libri quattuor*, Peter is addressed with his name Simon in Latin Christian poetry

311 For the reliquary, see Buschhausen (1971) 223–34, B11.

312 Dassmann (2003) 84–5, cf. Franz (1994) 29.

313 Duval (1992) 515–8: he also states that the poem does not show any influence of the *Apostolorum passio* hymn, but there are some similarities, see 1.10.6. Borella (1967) 206–7 suggests personal reasons for mentioning the place *ad catacumbas*: Relatives of Ambrose should have been buried there, since Ambrose's name Aurelius often occurs: “Le memorie più antiche, dunque dei Principe degli Apostoli, nell'anima di S. Ambrogio erano legate ai sepolchri dei suoi avi (...).” But cf. Döpp & Geerlings (2002) 19: the connection of the name Aurelius to Ambrose is maybe due to hagiography. Moreover, many people had this name since the promulgation of the *Constitutio Antoniniana*. The difference might also be in the more personal, unofficial character of the cult *ad catacumbas* compared to the liturgical ceremonies in San Pietro and San Paolo, see Bardy (1949) 225–6 (note 3) and 1.5.2.

314 Cf. Borella (1967) 204: “L'inno *Apostolorum passio* è una esaltazione del primato di S. Pietro.” Also Zwierlein (2010²) 174–5.

(v. 14). The reason is not clear; maybe Ambrose just wanted to vary on Peter's name. In the fourth and fifth stanza, Peter's death is narrated: the influence of the apocryphal acts of Peter (vv. 37–8) is seen in the description of Peter's crucifixion upside down. The oracle mentioned in verse 16 refers to the prophecy by Christ about Peter's death in John 21.18. This passage also explains the word *senex* (12,17), since Christ foresaid that Peter would die as an old man.³¹⁵ As in his *Sermo contra Auxentium* (13,142) Ambrose emphasises that Peter deliberately chose to die, something he further elaborated upon in his commentary on Luke (*In Lucam* 10,178).³¹⁶ Peter's devotion is stressed even more by the adjective *asperam* (with *mortem*, 12,20). His death is said to have contributed to the foundations of (Christian) Rome: (*Roma*) *fundata tali sanguine* (v. 23, cf. 1,15).³¹⁷

Both Peter and Paul could have been meant by *uates* (v. 24). The preceding verses are exclusively devoted to Peter: relating the verse to Paul would therefore come as a surprise for the audience.³¹⁸ On the other hand, since the hymn is devoted to both apostles, a reference to Paul would be in place at this point. Prudentius might well have interpreted the line as such, given his reference to Paul in *perist.* 12,28 with the word *vates* (see 1.10.5). After the description of Peter's death, the hymn now evolves into its final part and returns to the two apostles who are the actual subject of the hymn.³¹⁹ The word *uates* probably refers to Paul's preaching, more specifically to a passage in his letter to the Romans.³²⁰

The relationship between Peter and Paul is discussed in the third stanza (vv. 9–12):

Primus Petrus apostolus
nec Paulus impar gratia;
electionis uas sacrae
Petri adaequauit fidem.

315 Proba's designation of *senior* for Peter in *cento* 642 seems therefore to be of no influence here.

316 *Acta Petri* 35 (the *Quo vadis?* passage) can also have been of influence, see Zwierlein (2010²) 97–103 and Duval (1997), also Duval (1992) 538. Gnilka (2010) 229–31 criticises Zwierlein and Duval: he points to the parallel in Ambrose's commentary.

317 Zwierlein (2010²) 173–4 (note 116) also sees a reference to Roman churches here, with verses 21–2 (*Hinc Roma celsum uerticem / devotionis extulit*).

318 Cf. Gnilka (2009a) 128, according to whom “der Ductus des Gedankens” does not allow an attribution of verse 24 to Paul.

319 This is also the opinion of Duval (1992) 541.

320 Deproost (1990) 111.

Peter is the first apostle, but Paul is not unequal in grace: as a vessel of holy election he has equalled the faith of Peter.

Peter is mentioned first and called *primus*, but Ambrose hastens to emphasise that both apostles are equal (since Paul is a 'vessel of divine election', see Acts 9.15). In verse five, he already called them *aequales uiros*. Ambrose emphasises the equality of Peter and Paul in his prose writings too.³²¹ On the other hand, only Peter is explicitly connected with the foundation of Rome (12,23), which seems to highlight him above Paul.³²² The last pair of verses of the hymn is difficult to interpret. They have been read as a reference to Rome or to Peter and Paul. However, maybe both meanings should be attached to the verses. After a description of the crowd swarming around the city (*Tantae per urbis ambitum / stipata tendunt agmina*, vv. 25–6) and a reference to the feast that was celebrated at three places on the day the hymn was undoubtedly composed for (*trinis celebratur uiis / festum sacrorum martyrum*, vv. 27–8), the last strophe reads as follows:

Prodire quis mundum putet,
concurrere plebem poli:
electa gentium caput
sedes magistri gentium!³²³

One should think that the (whole) world turns out, that the people of heaven flock together. O chosen capital of the world! O see of the master of (all) people!

This is the culmination of the last part of the poem (vv. 21–32) which, following a description of the martyrdom of Peter (vv. 13–20), celebrates Rome (*Hinc Roma celsum uerticem / deuotionis extulit*: 'Hence Rome has raised the high summit of its piety', vv. 21–2) as the city of the bodies of the two apostles and their cult places. In the last verse, Ambrose also refers to the apostles.³²⁴ Whereas *sedes* alludes to the *sedes Petri* or *sedes apostolica* of Damasus (which is Rome),³²⁵ *magistri gentium* is a clear reference to Paul, the apostle of the

³²¹ Duval (1992) 532–4.

³²² Deproost (1990) 111.

³²³ Hymn 12,29–32. Cf. Duval (1992) 543–5 for discussion of the translation of these last verses.

³²⁴ Duval (1992) 544–6. Cf. Walpole (1922) 97.

³²⁵ Cf. Maccarrone (1962) 291–2 about the use of *sedes* in this sense.

heathens. In the last phrase of the hymn, its three main subjects are united in only three words: *sedes* (Rome, Peter) and *magistri gentium* (Paul).³²⁶

1.6.3 *Peter*

While Paul is not mentioned in Ambrosian hymns other than hymn 12, Peter plays an important part in the hymn for the *laudes* at cockcrow (*Aeterne rerum conditor*, also called *gallicinium*). The theme of awakening, which is central to the hymn, is also found in Prudentius' *Cathemerinon* 1.³²⁷ In Ambrose, particular emphasis is on the moment of dawn and its special position in God's order of time.³²⁸ The hymn refers to the creation of the earth and the creation of time, but also to the denial of Peter, which was revealed by cockcrow. The cock offers relief to those who are in trouble and protects against evildoers at night (cf. especially vv. 21–24).³²⁹ Ambrose himself comments on cockcrow in his *Hexameron* (5,24,88). It is not clear whether he wrote this prose text earlier than the poem or vice versa.³³⁰ One direct allusion to Peter can be found in the poem. When Ambrose describes the blessings of cockcrow, he includes: *hoc ipse petra ecclesiae / canente culpam diluit* (1,15–6: 'Through his chant, the very rock of the Church has washed away his fault', cf. *In Lucam* 10,89–90).³³¹ The direct connection between the cockcrow and the remission of Peter exceeds the function of the cock in the gospel.³³² Peter is praised by indicating him as *petra ecclesiae* (v. 15). After these lines, the audience could well have identified the *nauta* mentioned in verse 13 with Peter too. Peter's denial is not only

326 Cf. the interpretation by Deproost (1990) 111–2. *Contra*: Zwierlein (2010²) 175, who interprets these verses as referring to Peter, which, despite the preference for Peter over Paul in this hymn, does not seem probable, since the hymn is devoted to both apostles. It seems most apt to assume that the final verses resume the topic of the *concordia apostolorum*.

327 See 1.10.4, cf. 2.1.3.1.1. In a study devoted to the cock, Van der Leeuw (1941) 840–1 points to the frequent depiction of a cock on early Christian lamps.

328 See Den Boeft (2003) with an excellent discussion of the poem (and fierce criticism on other interpreters of the hymn). His basic principle in the interpretation of the hymn may be found on p. 37: "Ambrosius' hymn (...) deserves to be liberated from all superfluous exegetical overweight and to be enjoyed on its own terms, as lyrical poetry."

329 Cf. the commentary by Fontaine (1992); also Post (1984) 121–3, referring to *spes, salus* and *fides* as the central concepts of the hymn.

330 Fontaine (1992) 145–6. Cf. also Ambrose's *In Lucam* 10,72–92 about Peter's denial in the Gospel of Luke.

331 For the deliberate use of verbs that can be read both as present and perfect tense (*diluit, soluit, deserit, colligit*), see Den Boeft (2003) 33. Cf. Pintus (1999) 290 on the quadruple *hoc*.

332 Van der Leeuw (1941) 843–4. Mans (1993) 96 calls it the "emotive character" of the hymn.

mentioned in one of the central strophes of the hymn (strophe 4), but referred to again in the seventh strophe (1,25–8):

Iesu, labantes respice
et nos uidendo corrige;
si respicis, lapsus cadunt
fletuque culpa soluitur.

Jesus, look after those going wrong and correct us with your glance: when you look, faults disappear and guilt is washed away by tears.

Jesus looking back to someone who commits a sin can only refer to Luke 22.61; it also expresses Christ's concern for sinners.³³³ The idea that tears can wash away a sin is mentioned by Ambrose in his commentary on Peter's denial (*In Lucam* 10,88–92). By designating Peter as *ipse petra ecclesiae* (v. 15), Ambrose deliberately confirms Peter's authority.³³⁴ Ambrose also calls his parishioners to identify themselves with Peter: immediately after *hoc ipse . . . culpam diluit*, the new stanza begins with an adhortative verb meant to incite the worshippers (*surgamus ergo strenue*, v. 17).

Peter is also mentioned in the obscure *Carmen de ternarii numeri excellentia*. In this poem, which recalls several instances of the importance of the number three (v. 1: *omnia trina uigent sub maiestate tonantis*), Peter is named with John in the eighth line: *Trina Petro et Johanni in monte refulsit imago*.³³⁵ This verse undoubtedly refers to Matt 17.1–9: Moses and Elijah appear, with Jesus, to the disciples Peter, John and James (the Transfiguration). The emphasis is on the threefold image (*trina imago*), but the fact that the author omitted James is remarkable, since if James had been added the number of spectators

333 Den Boeft (2003) 35.

334 Ambrose was also the first to present Peter as *uicarius Christi*: *In Lucam* 10,175, see RAC 19,319 s.v. Jünger (Kany). Verse 15 was mentioned by Augustine in his discussion of the rock of the Church (Jesus Christ or Peter?). Augustine could not draw a firm conclusion, see *Retractationes* 1,21: *Harum autem duarum sententiarum quae sit probabilior, eligat lector*. Cf. Ludwig (1952) 68 (note 35), considering references to Peter as *petra* in Ambrose's work part of his poetic licence.

335 'A threefold image has shone to Peter and John on the mountain.' This line has not been retained in Alcuin's letter 137 and in the *Explanatio in ferculum* of Hincmar of Reims, but it is attested in the third source for this poem: Aldhelm's *De uirginitate*. All the sources attribute the work to Ambrose, but Weyman (1926) 43 doubts its authenticity (cf. 1.6). He does not doubt Aldhelm's version of the poem to be genuine, since it fits in appropriately and makes the total number of verses divisible by three (see id. p. 45, cf. Aus. *Griphus* 89–90).

would have been three and the verse would be in accordance with the Biblical passage. The other apostles were apparently more important for him, maybe because their relics were in Milan. Ambrose himself interprets the passage and amplifies on the presence of Peter, John and James in *In Lucam* 7,6. It is surprising to see this divergence in the writings of a man well aware of theological matters.³³⁶

The only other Biblical human figure designated by name in the poem is Jonah (v. 5). The three youths in the fiery furnace (Dan 3.19–30) are referred to as *tres pueri* in v. 6. Nevertheless, it seems that the author was not much interested in the apostles, since he could have mentioned them as a group in a separate line (e.g. because they are with twelve, which is divisible by three): apparently, his interest was in the Transfiguration itself. This is reflected in his incomplete description of the audience.

1.6.4 *John*

Apart from the reference in the *Carmen de ternarii numeri excellentia*, John is mentioned in a distich which allegedly comes from the Basilica apostolorum in Milan and in hymn 3,20 (*Iam surgit hora tertia*). Hymn 6 (*Amore Christi nobilis*) is entirely devoted to him.³³⁷

This hymn begins with a characterisation of John in the first strophe. The second and third strophe both refer to the vocation of John and his profession as a fisherman: initially in a literal sense, but subsequently in a symbolical way as a fisher of men after his vocation. Ambrose's language suggests a link with Peter, through a reference to Juvenecus.³³⁸ Peter and John are occasionally presented together in early Christian culture.³³⁹ Verses 5–6 offer a rare occasion (in poetry) of a reference to the daily life of the apostles before their vocation: John supported his father through his fishing (*Captis solebat piscibus / patris*

336 Therefore, this passage might be an additional argument to Weyman's idea that the *carmen* is not genuine.

337 The authenticity of this hymn is supported by the fact that three of its lines are attested in epigraphy: *amore Christi nobilis / et filius tonitru* was found in the church devoted to John in Ravenna, on a lost mosaic ordered by Galla Placidia. In *Inscript. lat. christ. vet.* 20, *sanctus Johannes arcana uidit* refers to *arcana Johannes Dei / fatu reuelauit sancto*, see Weyman (1926) 35, who discovered this, and Fontaine (1992) 307–8.

338 Fontaine (1992) 322–3 on *hamusque profundo* in verse 9, which also occurs in *evang.* 3,391. The combination of *hamus* and *profundum* is not attested elsewhere in early Christian Latin poetry.

339 Cf. 2.1.3.1.4 and 2.1.3.4.

senectam pascere).³⁴⁰ The following three strophes, in the middle of the poem, explicitly celebrate John as evangelist and emphasise that he is on the orthodox side by citing John 1.1–3 (vv. 17–21). John the evangelist and John the apostle are considered to be the same figure, in conformity with general early Christian exegesis.³⁴¹ The last pair of strophes alludes to the story of John surviving boiling oil in Ephesus (cf. Tertullian's *De praescriptione haereticorum* 36,3): by this wonder, he surpasses the martyrs (*hoc morte praestat martyrum*, v. 27).

The first strophe is pivotal for the interpretation of the entire hymn (vv. 1–4):

Amore Christi nobilis
et filius tonitruī,
arcana Iohannes Dei
fatu reuelauit sacro.

Noble through the love of/for God and son of thunder, John has revealed the secrets of God through his sacred words.

The first verse is ambiguous: it refers both to God's love for John and to the love of John for God. It undoubtedly refers to John as the pupil whom Jesus loved (see John 21.20–4, but also John 13.23, 19.26, 20.2 and 21.7). One of these passages, John 19.25–6, where Jesus speaks to Mary and John from the cross, is referred to in hymn 3 (*Iam surgit hora tertia*), 19–20: '*en filius, mater, tuus; / apostole, en mater tua*'. This hymn is devoted to the hour Jesus ascended the cross, when a solution for the original sin was offered (vv. 9–16). In the fifth strophe of the hymn, Mary is presented as a symbol of the Church (cf. *In Lucam* 7,5), while John represents the Christians, who are its members.³⁴² In this respect, John is the witness of Christ's testament, as Ambrose himself states it

340 'He used to feed his father with the fishes he had caught.' For other implications of these verses see the commentary of Fontaine (1992) 321.

341 Cf. Burnet (2014) 675 about John: "C'est bien un « super apôtre » qui combine tout ce qui passait pour des qualités dans le groupe chrétien: il est choisi par Jésus, il est une figure de fidélité (disciple), de théologien (l'évangile) et de voyant (l'Apocalypse)."

342 Franz (1994) 434–5. Her interpretation is particularly based on *In Lucam* 7,5. For stanza five and six, see id. 425–435. Cf. Charlet (1992) 222–3, who argues that Ambrose replaces the word *discipulus* in John with *apostolus* to explain that he meant the whole group of apostles. However, Ambrose probably wanted to emphasise the universal value of Jesus' crucifixion: the word *discipuli* was originally used for the pupils of Jesus, whereas *apostoli* referred to the twelve sent through the world to spread Jesus' message. Otherwise, Ambrose might have chosen the word *apostolus* merely *metri causa*, (Charlet's second proposal to explain the word).

(*In Lucam* 10,131). Or Ambrose used this phrase as a reference to Mary's virginity (cf. vv. 21–4 and *In Lucam* 2,4).

Tonitru in 6,2 undoubtedly reminded the audience of Jupiter Tonans, since the hymn is written in a classical metre and by an author showing his profound knowledge of traditional literature. At the same time, however, it is a direct reference to the Bible, where John and his brother James are called 'sons of thunder' (Mark 3,17; the surname is not found in the other gospels). Rather than to the apostles' temperament, this nickname might refer to God's presence in their activity. With Peter, John and James were probably the most authoritative apostles in the early Church (cf. Gal 2,9: "James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars (...)").³⁴³ Ambrose himself interprets the phrase as follows (*In Lucam*, 7,5):

Esto filius tonitru. Dicis: 'quomodo possum esse filius tonitru?' Potes esse si non in terra, sed in pectore Christi recumbas. Potes esse filius tonitru, si te terrena non moueant, sed ipse potius ea quae terrena sunt mentis tuae uirtute concutias. (...) Eris filius tonitru, si fueris filius ecclesiae.

Be a son of thunder. You say: 'How can I be a son of thunder?' You can be one, by resting not in the world, but at the chest of Christ. You can be a son of thunder, if worldly matters do not disturb you, but if, to the contrary, you set worldly matters in motion yourself, through the strength of your mind. (...) You will be a son of thunder by being a son of the Church.

Ambrose particularly emphasises the significance of John's gospel in verses 3–4: John has told the *arcana Dei* (cf. *In Lucam* 10,130). His special relationship with Christ is emphasised in strophe four (6,13–6):

Piscis bonus pia est fides
mundi supernatans salo,
subnixa Christi pectore,
Sancto locuta Spiritu.

The good fish is the pious faith, swimming over the billow of the world, leaning on Christ's breast, speaking through the Holy Spirit.

John is linked to *pia fides*, about which Ambrose says: *subnixa Christi pectore* (cf. John 13,23–5). With the interpretation of 3,19–20 in mind (John represent-

343 Collins (2007) 219–221. Fontaine (1992) 316–7 sees a reference to temperament.

ing the Christian believers in general), it also means that Christians have to rest upon Jesus (*subnixa*) and to stay close to him (*Christi pectore*).³⁴⁴ This is also the subject of distich 2: *Aspice Iohannem recubantem in pectore Christi, / unde Deum uerbum assumpsit pietate fateri*.³⁴⁵ The authenticity of distich 2 has been doubted, since no image of John resting on Jesus exists in the remaining corpus of early Christian art.³⁴⁶ However, given Ambrose's special reverence for the gospel of John revealed in hymn 6, the theme of distich 2 perfectly fits Ambrose's ideas. Moreover, the famous opening passage of John's gospel, which is paraphrased in 6,17–21, is mentioned in the distich, although it was probably not depicted: *aspice* . . . *Christi* might describe the image that distich two accompanied, while *unde* . . . *fateri* seems to be Ambrose's addition to justify his choice for the subject.

Since John revealed many secrets in his gospel—which he could do because of his special relationship with Jesus (see above and cf. Ambr. *De incarn.* 4,29)—Ambrose calls for praising John because of his gospel in 6,24: *scriptis coronatur suis*.³⁴⁷ The coronation of martyrs is attested in both literature and art.³⁴⁸ Although John did not suffer martyrdom, he surpasses the martyrs (6,27–8): he deserved a coronation. John is also praised for his faith, which is unmovable: *immobilis fide stetit* (v. 8). It is striking that there is almost no tradition of martyrdom suffered by John. This might be the result of John 21.20–3, although this passage does not necessarily indicate a natural death.³⁴⁹ According to Ambrose, John surpassed the martyrs, since his writings incited them (and would incite other Christians in the future) to accept a martyr death. John survived an attempt to let him die through boiling oil (6,29–31) and through this victory he even defeated Satan (*uictor aemuli*, 6,32).³⁵⁰ The use of this story by Tertullian might have made it easier for Ambrose to add a non-Biblical story about an apostle to his hymn, which was unusual in early Christian poetry.

344 Mans (1993) 97.

345 'Observe John lying on Christ's breast, since he has undertaken to confess with piety that God is the word.' Cf. John 1.1.

346 Merkle (1896) 204. Distich 1 has also been considered suspicious.

347 Cf. Mazzarino (1989) 65, who also connects the *titulus* to this thought.

348 Fontaine (1992) 328 who refers to the *Peristephanon* of Prudentius (12,6) and Peter and Paul on gold glasses (for which cf. Huskinson (1982) 51–9).

349 Klijn (2006) 177. Originally, this passage was maybe not included in the Gospel, see e.g. Most (2005) 67. Papias and Heracleon do suggest that John died as a martyr, but they seem to represent the view of a minority, see Bienert (1999) 23; cf. Burnet (2014) 387–90. Augustine affirms that John did not die as a martyr, but deserved the martyr crown since he was not afraid of martyrdom: *serm.* 296,5.

350 See Fontaine (1992) 329–34 for a commentary on stanzas seven and eight.

1.6.5 *The Other Apostles in Ambrose's Hymns*

Ambrose does probably refer to Peter, James and John in *titulus* 1 about the Transfiguration (cf. the *Carmen de ternarii numeri excellentia*, 1.6.3): *Maiestate sua rutilans sapientia uibrat / discipulisque Deum, si possint cernere, monstrat*.³⁵¹ Maybe this *titulus* and its accompanying image were depicted on the triumphal arch or in the apse of the Basilica martyrum (Basilica ambrosiana), spreading the message of Jesus teaching his worshippers and revealing God.³⁵² If Ambrose's *tituli* consisted of two cycles, one for the Old and one for the New Testament, they might have faced each other in a typological order. The *titulus* on the death of Absalom, which is a rare topic in poetry and prose alike in late antiquity, would then probably prefigure Judas' death.³⁵³

1.6.6 *Concluding Remarks*

Poetry was part of Ambrose's political endeavours as bishop of Milan and defender of the orthodox faith of the Church of Rome, of which he was a loyal adherent. He wrote hymns to strengthen the orthodoxy of his parishioners, in particular against influences from the Arian imperial court residing in Milan in his days. Ambrose was influenced by both the pagan and Christian poetic tradition (cf. the *double entendre* of *filius tonitrui* in 6,2). His hymns all have the same structure: eight strophes of four verses in acatalectic tetrameters. The genuineness of the *Carmen de ternarii numeri excellentia* is doubted.

Peter, Paul and John are the only apostles mentioned in Ambrose's poetry. The bishop never refers to the twelve apostles as a group or to apostles in general (*discipulis* in *titulus* 1 refers to Peter, John and James). Peter and Paul are an example to be followed by other martyrs (like Lawrence in hymn 13). The martyrdom of Peter is explicitly described in 12,13–20. Ambrose emphasises Peter's and Paul's bond with Rome (cf. 12,23; 31–2; 1,15). The didactic qualities of Paul (12,32) are praised. The *concordia* of Peter and Paul is an important theme for Ambrose (see e.g. 12,5 and 9–12). Peter is also mentioned apart from Paul in a poetic recount of his denial of Christ. His tears wash his sins away: a clear example of Ambrose using his exegetical work in his poetry. Apart from a reference

351 Hymn 13,1–4: 'His wisdom shines with a golden glow through his majesty / and if they are able to see him, he shows God to the disciples.' For the *titulus* see Cagiano de Azevedo (1963) 71 and Merkle (1896) 214.

352 Merkle (1896) 212, who suggests that distich 2 could have been combined with distich one in the same place.

353 See Gnillka (2009a) 139–46 for a discussion of the *titulus* on Absalom and its reception by Sedulius.

to the *sedes apostolica Petri* (12,32), Peter is also exalted by Ambrose's equation of the apostle to the rock where the Church should be built upon in 1,15.

Besides the *principes apostolorum*, John is also exalted by Ambrose, both as an apostle and an evangelist. In hymn 6, John's life as a fisherman and the miracle of the boiling oil are recounted. John is described as being more than a martyr since his writings incite others to accept martyrdom. The significance of John's gospel for Ambrose is particularly manifest in his paraphrase of John 1.1–3 (6,17–20; cf. also 6,3–4). John himself is very positively described (6,1; 3–4; 8; 15). *Titulus* 2 fits this view on the apostle, but that does of course not decisively prove its authenticity. The *Carmen de ternarii numerari excellentia* brings John and Peter together in a reference to the Transfiguration, where James is omitted.

The apostles are all more positively described by Ambrose than their representation in the Bible forced him to do.

1.7 Claudian

Claudius Claudianus was born in Alexandria, but he left the city in 391 and arrived in Italy in 394 at the latest. He first worked for the Anicii in Rome, an important Christian family providing both consuls of 395 (celebrated in Claudian's *Panegyricus dictus Probino et Olybrio*). Subsequently, Claudian stayed at court in Milan (395–402), where he worked for Stilicho (and his wife Serena). He wrote a diverse oeuvre, including an epic poem about the rape of Proserpine. Use of Christian poets—Prudentius in particular—seems plausible.³⁵⁴ The influence of the pagan literary tradition is felt in every verse. In 402, Claudian went to Ravenna. Two years later, he wrote the *Panegyricus dictus Honorio Augusto sextum consuli*. Claudian probably died shortly thereafter, since nothing is heard of him anymore. On the initiative of Stilicho, Claudian's minor poems were edited in 404. This shows the depth of the relationship between the two men and is also an additional argument for dating Claudian's death in the same year.³⁵⁵

354 Cameron (1970) 218. Id. 469–73 argues that Prudentius imitated Claudian and sees the reverse as a possibility. Dorfbauer (2012) 67–9 convincingly argues that Claudian knew and imitated Prudentius.

355 Cameron (1970) 418, who argues that Claudian was a propagandist of Stilicho. For counter-arguments see Von Albrecht (2003) 1067 with references. Schmidt (1992) opposes the idea that Stilicho was involved in editing Claudian's *carmina minora*.

Only two Latin poems reveal engagement with the Christian religion: *carmina minora* 32 and 50.³⁵⁶ The short *Carmina Graeca* six and seven are also Christian, both devoted to Christ. Poem 32 (*De saluatore*) can be interpreted as a proof of adherence to Christianity, but not necessarily so, since it was probably written on demand.³⁵⁷ Two other poems are considered spurious (see 1.7.3). Poem 50 is a satirical poem addressed to a certain James, written as response to critique of him on Claudian's poetry. Claudian mentions several Christian saints in this ridicule of the enigmatic James. The ongoing discussion about the precise meaning of *c.m.* 50 might indicate why this poem was transmitted in the first place: it was hardly understood in earlier times already and therefore kept, as part of the oeuvre of a talented poet.

There has been much debate about Claudian's feelings towards Christianity. Augustine and Orosius considered Claudian a pagan. Although it is not known if they knew Claudian personally or just repeated other people's judgements about him, there seems to be no reason not to trust their sincerity.³⁵⁸ The omnipresence of the pagan gods in Claudian's oeuvre does not reveal his personal convictions. As before, the classical, pagan tradition was at the heart of nearly all poetry in Claudian's time. Moreover, "The inference that, since Claudian writes as though the Roman state religion were in full bloom, he must have revered the old Roman gods, is based on a naïvely unitarian view of the amorphous and many-sided conglomeration of beliefs which went to make up late paganism."³⁵⁹ It seems most probable that Claudian was born in a pagan family

356 Cf. Döpp (1980) 34. Claudian's authorship of the poems *Laus Christi* (*c.m. app.* 19) and *Miracula Christi* (*c.m. app.* 20) is disputed, see Döpp & Geerlings (2002) s.v. Claudianus. According to Cameron (1970) 471–2 *Gig.* 106–7 contains a pun on Christianity.

357 Moreschini (2004) 59–61.

358 Claudian was a *Christi nomine alienus* (Augustine, *Ciu. Dei* 5,26) and a *paganus peruiacissimus* (according to Orosius, *Adv. pag.* 7,35,21. Cameron (1970) 191–2 (cf. p. 214) is skeptic about the reliability of Augustine's and Orosius' judgements. Nevertheless, he does not exclude the possibility that Claudian was a pagan, cf. p. 228: "Claudian may have been a pagan, or at any rate believed to be a pagan (...)." Christiansen & Christiansen (2009) 138–41 argue that the testimonies should be taken at face value and emphasise that emperors were lenient towards aristocratic pagans on several occasions (e.g. Theodosius towards Pacatus), as was Theodosius towards Claudian in this case. For the position of pagan aristocrats in higher circles see now e.g. Cameron (2011).

359 Cameron (1970) 199 (full discussion at 193–9). He concludes: "The answer is that in literature the old mythology had long since become merely decorative; and in any case bore so little relationship to contemporary paganism, that none but a few extremists gave its pagan associations a thought." Remarks about the "warmth and fondness beyond the requirements of epic" of Claudian for the Olympian gods (Vanderspoel (1986) 244) seem highly speculative to me.

but did not choose either for paganism or for Christianity. His poetry has been proven to contain many references to contemporary cults and philosophies. Claudian presumably was a man interested in different religions and opinions; whether he was devoted to one particular cult we cannot know.³⁶⁰

1.7.1 *Another Anti-Christian Poem? The Case of Palladas*

Claudian's *Carmen minus* 50 is the only satirical poem of late antiquity that directly refers to the apostles. One would expect more authors to have written invectives against Christian usages, but they were of course unlikely to be copied by Christian copyists.

However, one poem by the probably pagan schoolmaster Palladas is also said to contain a pun on the apostles. The chronology of Palladas' life is problematic: whereas he was dated 360–450 until the middle of the twentieth century and 319–400 thereafter, it has recently been argued that he lived from 250/260 to some time before 350.³⁶¹ The last two verses of Palladas' longest extant epigram (eighteen hexameters, *Anthologia Palatina*, 10,56), might refer to the Constantinian mausoleum in Constantinople, where coffins for the twelve apostles and for Constantine were exhibited.³⁶² The epigram mocks the reliability of women and ends (vv. 17–8): ὅρκοις λοιπὸν ἄγει τε πεποιθήμεν· ἀλλὰ μεθ' ὅρκον / ζητεῖν ἐστὶ θεοὺς δώδεκα καὶ ἑννερέου (generally emended to καινοτέρους) 'We trust then to oaths and her religious awe. But after her oath she can go and seek out twelve newer gods.'³⁶³

The twelve newer gods have been interpreted by Wilkinson as the twelve apostles. Nicephorus Callistus mentions that the mausoleum of Constantine was built on a site which had housed an altar of the twelve pagan gods. If this is right (which is doubtful given the reliability of Nicephorus) and if Palladas was an active poet in Constantine's time, the pun would be even better: the designation of the apostles as θεοί would then make more sense.³⁶⁴ Otherwise, it seems strange to indicate them with that word, although it might be an ironical repudiation of the cult of the martyrs. However, this cult was not as ubiquitously present in the Constantinian period as it was later on in the fourth century. Verses 17–8 might also only continue the mockery of women, without referring to Christianity. They would then refer to the twelve main gods, which

360 See Moreschini (2004).

361 See the summary in Wilkinson (2010) 179–80, with references.

362 It is this mausoleum where the relics of Andrew most probably were transported to, as is described by Paulinus of Nola, c. 19,329–52, see 1.11.7. Cf. Wortley (2005).

363 Text and translation: Paton (1999b).

364 Wilkinson (2010) 190–1. Cf. Stockmeier (1980) 108 for Constantine as τρισκαιδέκατος θεός.

- 10 Romanasque regat prospera Thecla manus;
 sic tibi det magnum moriens conuiua triumphum
 atque tuam uincant dolia fusa sitim;
 sic numquam hostili maculetur sanguine dextra:
 ne laceres uersus, dux Iacobe, meos.

By the ashes of Paul and the shrine of revered Peter, do not pull my verses to pieces, general James. So may Thomas prove a buckler to protect your breast and Bartholomew bear you company to the war; so may the blessed saints prevent the barbarians from crossing the Alps and Susanna endow you with her strength; so, should any savage foe seek to swim across the Danube, let him be drowned therein like the swift chariots of Pharaoh; so may an avenging javelin strike the Getic hordes and the favour of Thecla guide the armies of Rome; so may your dying guest provide you with a great triumph and may the out-poured barrels overcome your thirst: so may your hand never be stained with an enemy's blood—do not, I say, pull my verses to pieces.³⁶⁹

The poem seems to be an answer to James' criticism on Claudian's poetry, but the precise meaning of the verses has led to much debate.³⁷⁰ Probably, the poem was written shortly after the battle at Pollentia (6 April 402), where Stilicho's imperial army obtained a narrow defeat of the Goths, led by Alaric.³⁷¹ James allegedly criticised Claudian's presentation of the victory as entirely due to Stilicho's capacities.³⁷² Claudian reacts by making James' trust in the help of saints look ridiculous and mocking his unwillingness to fight and his dipsomania.³⁷³ This part of the interpretation is generally accepted.

Paul and Peter are mentioned in verse 1, Thomas and Bartholomew in verses 3 and 4.³⁷⁴ This is remarkable, since Claudian normally avails himself of pagan

369 Translation: Platnauer (1922), adapted. Text: Hall (1985).

370 See in particular Mulligan (2006) 170–6, Michners (2004), Consolino (2004), Cameron (1970) 225–7, Vanderspoel (1986) and Brummer (1972).

371 See Dunn (2010). Herzog (1977) 408–10 sees a similar concept behind *c.m.* 50 and Paulinus' *carmen* 26, in which the Nolan bishop tries to reassure the people with a story about Martinianus (1.11.4).

372 The same reproach can be found in Prud. *C. Sym.* 2,710 and 2,745, referred to by Consolino (2004) 170.

373 This particular context of the poem is emphasised by RAC 161–2 s.v. Claudianus I (Schmid), against an interpretation of the poem as an attack on the cult of the saints in general.

374 Brummer (1972) 340 signals Paul's prominence here and refers to Prudentius' *Peristephanon* 12,4; Vanderspoel (1986) 255 suggests rather unconvincingly that Prudentius reacted to Claudian's minor poem by devoting the prefaces of his *Contra Symmachum* to Peter and

imagery in his poetry (see 1.7).³⁷⁵ The reason for the presence of precisely these apostles has been much debated.³⁷⁶ It has not been noticed so far that James himself is also bearing an apostolic name, which is even found twice among the disciples (James son of Zebedee and James son of Alphaeus). Apart from stressing that James should not trust the Christian saints too much (including the apostles), he should not trust himself too much either (since he does not like to fight and he drinks too much, see vv. 11–3). Moreover, the fact that the addressee bears an apostolic name in a poem in which the apostles appear, might also be a hint to consider the addressee as fictitious.³⁷⁷ However, the difference between the title of the poem, which refers to a *magister equitum*, and the information in the poem referring to Jacobus as *dux* (vv. 1; 14) suggests that a real context was referred to. If the poem were entirely fictional, title and content would have corresponded.

Since Peter and Paul are the best-known apostles, their presence in the first line does not surprise in a poem that mocks someone's faith in the saints.³⁷⁸ This position emphasises that the cult around their graves (*cineres* and *limina*) was well established, contrary to the cults of other apostles. Peter is indicated with *cani* 'grey' or 'revered', which maybe neutralizes Paul's prominence in the verse. However, given the satirical nature of the poem, Claudian maybe intentionally uses the word for its *double entendre*: for the Christian saint-lover James Peter is revered, for other people he is an old, forceless saint (since the saints did not help James in his struggle against the Goths, see below).³⁷⁹ Paul

Paul, see 1.10.4–5. For literary parallels between Prudentius and Claudian, see Cameron (1970) 469–73.

375 Michners (2004) 181–2 considers the apostles' presence insignificant. He argues that Claudian just wanted to mock on James' belief in supernatural help. This is rather unlikely, however, since the poem is a curiosity in Claudian's oeuvre, in which the pagan gods are ubiquitous and references to Christian holy men or divine entities only occur in *Carmina minora* 32 and 50. Moreover, the apostles were particularly popular saints and are mentioned in a prominent position in the first lines of the poem.

376 But the question is completely ignored by Mulligan (2006).

377 As in three other satirical poems written by Claudian, see Michners (2004), who considers James to be a real person. Cf. Mulligan (2006) 170: "The direct naming of the addressee, although not unprecedented (cf. *Cureti, carm. min.* 44.1), deviates from Claudian's general practice of delaying the act of naming (....)."

378 It seems questionable to me, however, that Claudian on purpose replaced the name of God for the names of Peter and Paul in verse 1; if so, this would again refer to James' overrating of the saints' power, see Consolino (2004) 164.

379 Ficker (1887) 39, who in his book on the apostles' representation shows a remarkable familiarity with early Christian poetry, interprets *canus* as 'grey' in this poem. Ricci (2001)

is also referred to, indirectly, in v. 10, since Thecla is mainly known from her role in the *Acta Pauli*.

Bartholomew is mentioned here for the first time in Christian Latin poetry. Thomas is also rarely mentioned, with the exception of his intervention in Juvenius *evang.* 4.330–2 (1.2.3.3) and the account about his disbelief in Christ's resurrection in Commodianus' *Carmen* 555–62 (see 1.1.1). According to J. Vanderspoel, Thomas and Bartholomew are mentioned in Claudian's poem because they both died in the East (in India).³⁸⁰ Vanderspoel argues that there is a link to the martyrs whose relics James transported (Alexander, Martyrus and Sisinnius), because they had done missionary work among the barbarian Alans and barbarians were traditionally associated with Eastern regions. Moreover, Sisinnius and Martyrius died in a way similar to that of Thomas and Bartholomew.³⁸¹ However, the ways of martyrdom are not exactly similar. Moreover, Vanderspoel's reference to Bartholomew's death by skinning seems not relevant anyway, since this tradition was not yet established in the fourth century.³⁸²

It is ironical that Thomas and Bartholomew are invoked to protect against barbarians (vv. 3–4), since in hagiographical literature they were told to be murdered by the 'barbarians' in India. When Claudian wrote his poem, the Goths were still swarming around and Alaric, the tormentor of the empire, was still alive. Via a reference to Thomas and Bartholomew, Claudian presents James' trust in the saints as idle. Apocryphal stories about the apostles were not often referred to in early Christian poetry, but Claudian's references to them are not surprising. The poet, who was not an ostensibly dedicated Christian to say the least, presumably did not feel the need to distinguish the canon from apocryphal writings.

Another possible explanation for verses 3 and 4 is a particular reverence for Thomas and Bartholomew from the side of James (and maybe also for Susanna, see v. 6). Maybe the verses then refer to relics that were carried on the body. In this way, James took Bartholomew and Thomas, his favourite saints,

interprets the word as "vecchio" in her commentary (p. 286), but translates "canuto" (p. 287).

380 However, Claudian cannot have been inspired by "contemporary representation of Thomas' death in art"—as is stated by Vanderspoel (1986) 249—since those representations simply did not exist at the time. For Alexander, Martyrus and Sisinnius and the literary character of the description of the region in which they died, see Humphries (1999) 181–3 and references.

381 Vanderspoel (1986) 249–50.

382 Burnet (2014) 469–70. In Greek and Latin literature of late antiquity, Bartholomew's martyrdom through crucifixion or decapitation was widely accepted.

with him to war.³⁸³ The relative obscurity of apocryphal stories in the circles for which Claudian wrote his poetry and Claudian's otherwise minor interest in Christian matters in his poetry suggest that this interpretation might be more realistic than the ingenuous explanation by Vanderspoel. It is doubtful whether Claudian's audience would have understood a pun on the martyr death of two rather obscure apostles and linked them to contemporaneous threats (that came not exactly from the far East in Claudian's time).

Apart from Claudian's choice of saints, verses 11 and 12 have been much debated too, because of their unclear meaning. Franca Ela Consolino's interpretation seems most convincing: according to her, the lines refer both to James' preference for drinking and to his unwillingness to fight. Only if his adversary had drunk too much, he would be able to beat him. After his defeat, James could drink what the enemy had left.³⁸⁴

At first sight, the wishes in the poem could also be understood in a positive way: Claudian wishes the saints to help James if he does not criticise his verses anymore. However, since Claudian's status as a poet was impressive, which is clear from his position at court, the statue erected for him on the forum of Trajan and the reception of his work, a sincere supplication towards a critic seems awkward. Nor does it seem to be in line with the rest of Claudian's oeuvre, which includes several satirical poems. Moreover, Claudian's scarce use of Christian imagery in general makes the use of names of specific saints in this poem even more remarkable. The poet does not subconsciously refer to Christian matters. Given his position at a Christian court, Claudian is not likely to have intended to criticise the saints in general, but only James's excessive trust in supernatural powers.³⁸⁵

1.7.3 *The Apostles in the Miracula Christi*

Among the *spuria* on the name of Claudian, two Christian poems have been transmitted: one is called *Laus Christi*, the other is called *Miracula Christi*.³⁸⁶ Christ is the subject of both of them, but only in the latter poem is an apostle

383 Ricci (2001) 287 refers to portable relics, without mentioning possible implications for the interpretation of the poem.

384 Consolino (2004) 172–4. At least, this is a more convincing analysis of the passage than the interpretation of Vanderspoel (1986), which is inspiring but speculative and refuted by Consolino.

385 Many pagans criticised the Christians for their veneration of martyrs, see e.g. Cameron (1965) 23–4.

386 Hall (1985) 425–7 (no. 20, also ascribed to Merobaudes, and 21 of the section *Carminum vel spuriorum vel suspectorum appendix*). *Carmina Graeca* 6 and 7 (id. 435) are devoted to Christ.

mentioned. The poem consists of nine distichs. Each pair of verses forms a unity and looks like a *titulus* (cf. especially Ambrose's two line *tituli*).³⁸⁷ The themes successively discussed are the Annunciation, the Magi, the miracle of Cana, the miracle of loaves and fishes, the healing of the blind man, the resurrection of Lazarus, Peter on the waves, the healing of the woman with an issue of blood and the healing of the paralysed man. These are all well-known Biblical stories, frequently found in early Christian literature and art.

Peter occurs in the seventh stanza (vv. 13–4): *Nutantem quatit unda Petrum, cui Christus in alto / et dextra gressus firmat et ore fidem* 'The waves shake hesitating Peter, of whom Christ upon the sea ascertained the steps with his arm and the faith with his voice' (cf. Matt 14.30–1). The last part of the sentence is remarkable, since *firmare* cannot refer to Jesus' remark to Peter in the Bible ('"You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"', Matt 14.31), but refers to the comforting words Christ spoke to the whole group of apostles, frightened by his appearance (Matt 14.27: "But Jesus immediately said to them: 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid' ", cf. Mark 6.50 and John 6.20). In this way, the focus is transferred from Peter's lack of faith to Jesus' help and kindness, which fits in the rest of the poem aiming at the exaltation of Christ.

In poetry, Peter's attempt to walk on the waves was also mentioned several times by Prudentius. He also described Jesus' rebuke (c. *Symm. praef.* 2,37–40). *Ditt.* 35,140 even bears some verbal correspondences to Claudian's text: *at ille manum regit et uestigia firmat* is recalled by *dextra gressus firmat*, although this is not necessarily a direct allusion.

1.7.4 Concluding Remarks

C.m. 50 provides remarkable insights in the role of the apostles in the quibbles in higher circles. The fact that four apostles are mentioned in a small piece that criticises excessive trust in the saints underlines the rise of the cult of the apostles as venerable saints around the year 400. It has been suggested that Bartholomew and Thomas were chosen because of the apocryphal stories about their stay (and dead) in India: in that case Claudian's poem includes two rather unique references to the martyrdom of apostles other than Peter and Paul. However, it seems more plausible that Claudian referred to James' portable relics, which would probably have been visible and therefore known to other people.

³⁸⁷ Cf. Buecheler & Riese (1906) 329, in the *apparatus criticus*: "*Disticha singulis picturis uel fortasse musiuīs destinata puto*." Cf. also Arnulf (1997) 137–8, with iconographical references, and *Introduction* 4.2.2.1.

The *Miracula Christi* was probably not written by Claudian, considering the rest of his oeuvre. The poem might consist of *tituli*, which resemble those of Ambrose. Peter's attempt to walk on the waves is often attested in early Christian art. The author presents Peter in a favourable light by a slight intervention that resembles those of Juvenecus.

1.8 Amphilochius of Iconium

Amphilochius of Iconium (340/345–398/404) was born in a prosperous family. His uncle Gregory of Nazianzus converted him. In 360, he became one of the pupils of Libanius in Antioch. Amphilochius worked as lawyer in Constantinople in 364/365. Although he aimed at living a life of solitary contemplation, he was demanded by Basil of Caesarea to become bishop of Iconium (modern Konya, Turkey) in 373. He vigorously fought against heretics and defended the Nicene Creed. Amphilochius was one of the participants of the council in Constantinople, where Gregory presided.³⁸⁸

Several works of Amphilochius are lost, but nine homilies in Greek are preserved, some fragments and small other works. His only poetic work is the *Iambi ad Seleucum*, previously attributed to Gregory of Nazianzus (II,2,8 in Migne) and transmitted among his writings. The *terminus post quem* for this work seems to be 373, since Amphilochius often refers to Basil's ideas and works in his poem and his contact with Basil became closer from that year onwards (cf. Basil, *ep.* 150).³⁸⁹ Although possible references to events in 382 or 387 have also been detected, the work can probably be dated shortly after Basil's death in 379 or after the council of Constantinople in 381. The poem is in iambics, except for the last three verses (in hexameters). Verses 334–7 are considered spurious.³⁹⁰ Amphilochius probably chose the metrical form for didactic reasons; otherwise he wanted to compete with pagan (or heretical) authors writing in the same metre.³⁹¹

388 Maybe Amphilochius met Jerome there (and Cyril, see Oberg (1973) 69). Jerome mentions Amphilochius in *uir. ill.* 133: *Amphilochius, Iconii episcopus nuper mihi librum legit 'de spiritu sancto', quod Deus, et quod adorandus, quodque omnipotens sit.* The work referred to is lost.

389 Oberg (1973) 71–4. Cyril of Jerusalem's oeuvre is another important source for Amphilochius.

390 Oberg (1969) 2–3 about the date and id. 3 about the spurious verses. Amphilochius' text is cited from a slightly revised edition: Oberg (1973).

391 Oberg (1973) 74.

The poem is addressed to a further unknown Seleucus. Given the many similarities with Basil's work *Πρὸς τοὺς νέους*, Amphilochius' poem may have had the same addressees: young people who had just left primary school and were about to enter higher education or a monastery.³⁹² Amphilochius' poem may also be compared to Gregory's didactic poetry. There are two major parts: vv. 8–180 contains an enumeration of activities which are to be avoided and an exhortation to behave in a Christian way. Vv. 181–319 are about the Bible and the orthodox faith, including a list of canonical books (vv. 261–319). This list is almost similar to Gregory's (1,1,12), but unlike his uncle, Amphilochius accepts the books *Judith* and *Revelation*.³⁹³

1.8.1 *The Apostles in the Iambi ad Seleucum*

Amphilochius rarely gives his opinion about the apostles. When he mentions (one of) them, he usually refers to a book in the Biblical canon.³⁹⁴ Like Gregory, Amphilochius dismissed the reading of the apocrypha: in v. 290, he urges to accept only four gospels (*εὐαγγελιστὰς τέσσαρας δέχου μόνους*) and in v. 297 he mentions *τὴν* (sc.: *βίβλον*) *τῶν καθολικῶν πράξεων ἀποστόλων* as the second book of Luke in the canon.³⁹⁵

Apart from v. 297, the apostles are only mentioned as a group in v. 329. If Seleucus lives a pious life (*εὐσεβῆς βίος*, v. 328), the prophets, martyrs and apostles will surround him in a choir, like one of his own limbs:

καί σε προφητῶν, μαρτύρων, ἀποστόλων
 330 χορὸς περιστὰς ὥσπερ οἰκεῖον μέλος
 στέψει προπέμπων ἐπινίκιον κρότον.

And when the chorus of prophets, martyrs and apostles has surrounded you, like your own limb, it will garland you, applauding you as a victor.³⁹⁶

392 Oberg (1973) 70–1. Assuming that Iconium had an institute for higher education does not seem necessary, *pace ibid.*

393 Palla (1989) 176.

394 Amphilochius mentions the Acts of the apostles (v. 297), the Gospel, letter and Revelation of John (vv. 292; 313; 316) the Gospel of Matthew (v. 291) and the letters of Peter (vv. 313; 315).

395 Given verse 290, this interpretation of *τὴν* (sc.: *βίβλον*) *τῶν καθολικῶν πράξεων ἀποστόλων* seems most suitable. It could also be interpreted as 'the acts of the apostles performed everywhere', see Oberg (1969) 75.

396 Translations of Amphilochius are my own.

Seleucus will go amidst the choruses of angels (vv. 332–3). The apostles seem to have the same prestige for Amphilochius as the prophets and martyrs.³⁹⁷ They are holy men: human beings with a special status. They have already gained victory (i.e. reached heaven), and are represented as examples of people who led a pious life.

Paul's 1 Cor 15.33 (which contains a quotation from Menander) is cited in v. 75 as an authoritative text to support Amphilochius' view. In vv. 300–10, the canonical letters of Paul are listed. Paul himself is said to have written in a sophisticated way (σοφῶς, v. 300). Furthermore, he is introduced with the phrase: τὸ σκεῦος ἐξῆς προστίθει (sc. Seleucus) τῆς ἐκλογῆς, / τὸν τῶν ἐθνῶν κήρυκα, τὸν ἀπόστολον (vv. 298–9). The phrase σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς ('a chosen instrument') is taken from Acts 9.15. It is the wording with which God described Saul to Ananias. Paul was known as the apostles of the heathens (cf. 1 Tim 2.7: διδάσκαλος ἐθνῶν), which explains τὸν τῶν ἐθνῶν κήρυκα ('messenger of the heathens').

John is mentioned as Βροντῆς γὰρ υἱὸν, son of thunder, in v. 294 (cf. Mark 3.17). Unlike Ambrose (hymn 6,2, see 1.6.4), who explains this nickname by John's close relationship with God, Amphilochius explains the term in a more literal way (vv. 294–5): Βροντῆς γὰρ υἱὸν τοῦτον εἰκότως καλῶ / μέγιστον ἠχήσαντα τῷ θεοῦ λόγῳ, 'Since I rightly call him the son of the thunder, because he had pealed most loudly with the word of God.'³⁹⁸ John is also praised as the evangelist 'who came fourth in time, but was the first in the depth of his dogmas' (vv. 292–3: ἀρίθμει τὸν Ἰωάννην χρόνῳ / τέταρτον, ἀλλὰ πρῶτον ὕψει δογμάτων).³⁹⁹

1.8.2 Concluding Remarks

Amphilochius probably wrote his poem as a didactic manual about the correct orthodox Christian life, to which he added a canon of the (Biblical) books that should be read. Amphilochius barely mentions the apostles. Most often, he just mentions them as writer of a book in the New Testament canon. The apostles are placed among prophets and martyrs, which emphasises their status of holy men. Amphilochius' exegesis of Mark 3.17 differs from that encountered in Ambrose: John is called 'son of thunder' for his loudly proclaiming Christian faith (vv. 294–5). John and Paul are praised as outstanding writers of the Bible (vv. 293 and 300).

397 Cf. for the link between apostles and prophets e.g. Eph 2.20 and 3.5 and Hartman (1978) 441.

398 Cf. Gr. Naz. *Funebris oratio in patrem* xxiv b (PG 35) and *Funebris oratio in laudem Basilii magni* lxxvi c (PG 36). Cf. also Oden and Hall (1998) 41–2 for some exegesis on the passage in Eastern Church Fathers.

399 For the special status of the Gospel of John in the early Church see e.g. Eusebius *h.e.* 3.24.

1.9 Gregory of Nazianzus

Gregory was born in Nazianzus, around the year 330. His father was the local bishop. Gregory received a thorough education in both Caesarea (in Cappadocia and Palestine), Alexandria and Athens (350–358/9), where he met Basil of Caesarea and the future Roman emperor Julian. Against his will, Gregory was restrained from a life of study and contemplation and ordained priest by his father in his birthplace (362). For religious and political reasons, Basil—by then archbishop of Cappadocia—asked Gregory to hold the newly created episcopal see of Sasima (372), but the local population was stirred up against Gregory, and he withdrew. After some time of contemplation elsewhere, he returned to Nazianzus and became suffragan bishop of Nazianzus.⁴⁰⁰ After the death of his parents, Gregory left his episcopate again for years of contemplation, this time in a convent (devoted to Thecla) in Seleucia, in the years 375–378.

In 379, however, Gregory was asked to become leader of the orthodox Church of Constantinople, a city whose Christian community had been led by Arian bishops for forty years. He conducted services in the small Anastasia church and achieved much success with his orations.⁴⁰¹ Theodosius ordained him bishop of Constantinople. Gregory stayed there until the second ecumenical council of Constantinople, which was held there in 381. At this council, Gregory, who became chair after the death of Meletius of Antioch during the meeting, differed in opinion with the majority of bishops on several points, notably on the status of the Holy Spirit in the Nicene Creed; Gregory resigned (in order not to be forced to put his signature under the council's decrees). In his *Eis τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον*, Gregory defends himself against the rumours accusing him of deliberately leaving the council. He claims to have expected the council to yield to his arguments if he threatened to leave: to his bewilderment, however, his resignation was accepted.⁴⁰² Gregory returned to Nazianzus and remained on his country estate from 383 until his death, presumably in 390.

He was one of the most prolific verse-writers of antiquity and wrote approximately 20,000 lines of poetry.⁴⁰³ Gregory still is considered the greatest

400 Cf. Tuilier, Bady et al. (2004) xxiii: "C'est, semble-t-il, le premier coadjuteur de l'histoire."

401 A convenient bilingual edition of all orations is Moreschini, Crimi et al. (2000).

402 *Eis τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον* 1703–96, cf. Jungck (1974) 13 and commentary a.l.

403 Gregory's authorship of some poems is disputed and opinions about the number of verses he wrote are therefore diverging, e.g. Höllger (1985) 41 and Moreschini (1994) 9 count 17533 verses, Tuilier, Bady et al. (2004) lx 20899. The Suda mentions 30000 verses (s.v. Γρηγόριος 4), as does Jerome *vir. ill.* 117. According to many critics Gregory should have written less, cf. e.g. Jungck (1974) 21: "Für uns ist aber Gregor doch der Dichter, der um alles unendlich

theologian of the four Church Fathers of the Eastern Church. He also conducted a lively correspondence, of which 249 letters remain. Most of the information about his life is found in his own oeuvre, which also includes several autobiographical poems. His Εἰς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον (*De uita sua*, 11,1,11) is known as one of the rare autobiographies of antiquity, which is only to be compared to Augustine's *Confessiones*. The only complete edition of Gregory's poetic works is Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* (volume 37 and 38).⁴⁰⁴ The Maurists who compiled it, arranged Gregory's poems in two main categories: *Poemata theologica*—subdivided in the *Carmina dogmatica* (1,1,1–38) and the *Carmina moralia* (1,2,1–40)—and *Poemata historica*—which contain the *Carmina de se ipso* (11,1,1–99) and *Poemata quae spectant ad alios* (11,2,1–7). Gregory also wrote several epigrams (included in *Anthologia Palatina* 8) and epitaphs.

Most of his poetry is written in hexameters, elegiacs or iambics. Furthermore, he composed some anacreontic poems and poetic texts in variations on the iambic metre. The authenticity of poems 1,1,32 and 1,2,3 is disputed: these are written in a quantitative metre in which the word accent is predominant.⁴⁰⁵ Alan Cameron has suggested that Gregory may have deliberately ignored classical quantities: "Within the parameters of his classicizing, Gregory was (I suggest) making a half-hearted attempt to come to terms with the pronunciation of his own day, anticipating the Byzantine doctrine of *dichrona*."⁴⁰⁶

viele Worte macht." The large number of verses Gregory wrote has probably discouraged scholars to discuss his poetry in its entirety. Some exceptions are Prudhomme (2006) and Demoen (1996).

404 Several initiatives have been started to replace Migne: the Budé series has announced to publish all the poems, but only the first volume has appeared until now (including 11,1,1–11): Tuilier, Bady et al. (2004). Poem 11,1,1 has been edited by Meier (1989), in a series called *Forschungen zu Gregor von Nazianz im Auftrag der Görres-Gesellschaft*. The *Poemata Arcana* (1,1,1–5; 7–9) are edited in Moreschini, Sykes et al. (1997). The epigrams can be found in Paton (1999-a), (LCL 67 and 68). I will use these editions if I cite any of these poems. For the other poems I use Migne's edition. Some of Gregory's prose works have been edited in the *Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca Corpus Nazianzenum*.

405 The discussion is pointed at 1,2,3. Mathieu (1983) has refuted the arguments against authenticity from Keydell (1951) 334–7. Without decisive arguments against authenticity (which repetition is not, given the repetitive and didactic character of Gregory's poetry), I consider the poem authentic, *pace* Zehles (1987) 8 (among others), who dismisses Mathieu's article by concluding that he defends 1,2,3 "ohne zu überzeugen." From the poems cited in this study, Gregory's authorship of 1,1,12, 1,1,28 and 1,2,23 is rejected by Demoen (1996) 63 (note 122).

406 Cameron (2004) 339 (see also p. 338). Cf. Brodňanská (2012) 120–6 and Simelidis (2009) 54–7 about Gregory's use of the metre. Commodianus might show a comparable endeavour, see 1.1. The same is said of the *Carmen adversus Marcionem*, the date of which

The authorship of the tragedy *Χριστὸς πάσχων*, a cento tragedy about the Passion of Christ in euripidean verses, is by most scholars considered not to be Gregory's, although there are still scholars who defend its authenticity.⁴⁰⁷ The *Iambi ad Seleucum* have been attributed to Gregory for a long time, but are now ascribed to Amphilochius of Iconium (see 1.8). Amphilochius was a relative of Gregory and might have arranged his poems after his death, with the help of Gregory's secretary Elaphius. Given the great number of poems collected, it seems probable that people who were near to Gregory and had access to his personal archive, arranged and edited them.⁴⁰⁸ However, poems were presumably also distributed by their addressees.⁴⁰⁹ There is no evidence for the spread of editions during Gregory's lifetime, although 11,1,39 might indicate one.⁴¹⁰ It is generally assumed that Gregory wrote most of his poetry in the years 381–390, but the chronology has not been studied extensively.⁴¹¹ Although Gregory's orations were most successful, his poems were praised too, e.g. by John Chrysostom. They were also known in the West (Jerome) and were translated in several languages in the East.⁴¹² Nevertheless, they were not

is disputed, see Keydell (1951) 320. It is improbable that Gregory knew Commodianus, who seems to have been an obscure poet even for his Latin colleagues.

407 Defending authorship by Gregory: Trisoglio, F. 1996. *San Gregorio Nazianzeno e il Christus Patiens: il problema dell'autenticità gregoriana del dramma*. Firenze: Le Lettere (*non vidi*); Tuilier (1969). Among others, RAC s.v. Gregor II (Gregor von Nazianz) 812–3 (Wyss) confirms the (late, maybe 12th century) Byzantine provenance of the play. Cf. 1.9.1.

408 Tuilier, Bady et al. (2004) lxxv–lxxvii.

409 The so-called "Schneeballsystem", see Gertz (1986) 172–3. This hypothesis would exonerate Gregory's heirs of the reproach made by McGuckin (2006) 205 (note 50): "Gregory's heirs seem to have issued the "Complete Poetic Writings"—not a friendly thing to do for any poet."

410 McGuckin (2006) 205 supposes an edition prepared by Gregory with the help of his nephew Nicobulos and others from his "inner circle", shortly after he left Constantinople. Poem 11,1,39 would have been the first poem of this collection, which also included Εἰς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον. Cf. McGuckin (2006) 205–12 and Demoen (2000) 2.

411 McGuckin (2006) 203 suggests that some large fragments were already written when Gregory was in Athens, some others later, e.g. the pieces on virginity (1,2,1–4): in this case, they were composed in the period that Gregory was in Seleucia (375–8), visiting the nuns of Thecla.

412 For the praise by John Chrysostom, see Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* vi,8 and Sozomenos *Hist. eccl.* viii,8. Cf. Jerome *uir. ill.* 117. Jerome was a pupil of Gregory in Constantinople in 379/80–381, see Galla (1984) 315–6. See Gertz (1986) 170–2 for a overview of the reception of Gregory's poetry.

imitated formally (except for the epigrams, epitaphs and *gnomai*).⁴¹³ One possible exception is the *Apotheosis* of Prudentius, for which the *Poemata Arcana* (I,1,1–5 and 7–9, which are thought to have been composed as a whole) might have been a model.⁴¹⁴

In II,1,39 Gregory defends himself against critics and expounds his reasons to write poetry: in order to restrain himself from writing too much (by the constraint of metre, vv. 34–7),⁴¹⁵ to sweeten the Christian commands for young people who loved literature (37–46), to impede pagans from surpassing Christians in the field of poetry (vv. 47–53) and to be a solace for his miseries and old age (vv. 54–7). Gregory also states that content is more important than form (v. 51: εἰ καὶ τὸ κάλλος ἡμῖν ἐν θεωρίᾳ), a well-known Christian topos.⁴¹⁶ Gregory wrote in classical metre and style and his poetry is imbued with classical literature, although he enumerated pagan themes he did not want to mention in his verses (II,1,34 71–7) and he only rarely referred literally to pagan authors.⁴¹⁷ His moralistic writings are undoubtedly Christian, but parts of it fit (popular) philosophy.⁴¹⁸ In general, Gregory's work is characterised by its didactic nature.⁴¹⁹

Gregory felt a duty to spread God's word (cf. II,1,34 69: Ὅργανόν εἰμι θεοῦ, 'I am an instrument of God').⁴²⁰ He considered his poetry useful (II,1,39 62: Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἄχρηστον, ὥς ἐγὼ μαι παντελῶς, 'But I surely think it is not useless') and chose the poetic form in the hope that people would more easily remember the content of his writings (v. 67). Gregory announces and defends his way of writing poetry in vv. 22–4: ἄλλην μετῆλθον τῶν λόγων ταύτην ὁδὸν, / εἰ μὲν καλὴν

413 Gertz (1986) 171.

414 Keydell (1951) 320–1.

415 A rather ironical statement for one of the most prolific writers of antiquity, but it is a rhetorical topos.

416 Moreschini (1988) 58.

417 See for Gregory's relation to classical culture especially Demoen (1993) and RAC s.v. Gregor II (Gregor von Nazianz) 839–58 (Wyss); also Demoen (1996) and Cataudella (1927) 90. Cf. the judgment by Wyss (1949) 198: "Gregors Werk erscheint uns allzu oft beinahe als ein Mosaik aus zusammengelesenen Resten älterer Formen, Bilder und Gedanken (...)."

418 Moreschini (1994) 37–8. McGuckin (2006) points at Gregory's opinion about several aspects of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy.

419 For the didactic nature of Gregory's poetry see e.g. Ackermann (1903) 11–2, who emphasises that Gregory's poetry should be judged by his ability "die abstrakten Stoffe der Reflexion dem Gefühle näher zu bringen." Apart from the didactic element, there is a strong elegiac tendency in Gregory's poetry, see id. 21–2. Palla (1989) 175 has suggested that Gregory wrote the purely didactic poems on demand.

420 Translations of Gregory are my own, unless stated otherwise.

γε, εἰ δὲ μή γ', ἐμοὶ φίλῃν· / μέτροις τι δοῦναι τῶν ἐμῶν πονημάτων.⁴²¹ The interpretation of πονημάτων is ambiguous here: it can be translated by 'efforts' or 'literary works'. In the latter case, it suggests that Gregory versified work that he first wrote in prose.⁴²² Much of his poetry (especially in the *Carmina dogmatica*) indeed seems to be a sort of versified prose, but rather than the result of versifying efforts of Gregory, this could be the result of the didactic nature of Gregory's poetry.⁴²³ Among Gregory's poems some probably tried to communicate the content of the Bible to young Christians or neophytes (e.g. I,1,12–28: poems enumerating the miracles or parables of Christ mentioned in the different gospels, the twelve disciples, the plagues of Egypt etc.). For most of his poetry, however, the audience remains unknown.⁴²⁴

Maybe Gregory also wanted to provide alternative poetry for the verses of the heretic Apollinarii (cf. *ep.* 101,73).⁴²⁵ According to Sozomenos and Socrates, they wrote Biblical poetry in different classical metres, which unfortunately is almost entirely lost.⁴²⁶ In his letter to Kleidonius, Gregory explicitly attacks heretic poetry and regards it as one of his motives to write poetry.⁴²⁷

Gregory was a fervent defender of the orthodox faith, like the other Cappadocian Fathers Basil and Gregory of Nyssa. Maybe this partly explains why didactic elements are found even in Gregory's autobiographical poetry.⁴²⁸ The *Poemata historica* are less didactic than the *Poemata theologica* and seem to have been written partly as a defence against critics. Apart from didactic elements, rhetorical influence can be attested in Gregory's poetry, especially in his iambs. This is probably due to his fruitful period in Constantinople, where he delivered his successful speeches.⁴²⁹

421 'I followed that other way of writing: whether it is (deemed to be) good or bad, I like it to display some of my efforts in metre.'

422 Demoen (2000) 8.

423 I am not sure that Plato inspired Gregory to write didactic and moralistic poetry, as McGuckin (2006) 199 contends: he could also feel the need to write poetry without philosophical argument. McGuckin assumes that Gregory had a well-considered, coherent vision on Christian *paideia* that he wanted to explain in his poetry (id., especially 211–2).

424 Demoen (1996) 64–70.

425 Simelidis (2009) 24–30; Moreschini (1994) 5–8. Cf. Ackermann (1903) 40; 52–3; 59. If Gregory really wanted to outdo the poems of the Apollinarii, a play like the Χριστὸς πάσχω perfectly fitted his purpose.

426 Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* I,16,3–5 and Sozomenos, *Hist. Eccl.* v,18,2.

427 *Ep.* 101; 193 7–12 (PG 37); Cf. Sozomenos, *Hist. Eccl.* VIII,8,1–3 about heretics singing hymns, contended with their own weapons by catholic Christians.

428 Moreschini (1994) 21.

429 Jungck (1974) 21–5.

1.9.1 *The Apostles in Gregory's Poetry*

Although there are many examples of Gregory mentioning the apostles in his poetry, their presence is still restricted given the size of Gregory's oeuvre. In most cases, Gregory mentions the apostles as a group (about thirty times). When he calls individual apostles by name, he refers—not surprisingly—mostly to Paul (seventeen) and Peter (fifteen). Judas is mentioned less often (eight). Matthew (seven, but often in his position as evangelist) and John (four) are mentioned a few times. The other apostles are mentioned only once, in a poem enumerating the twelve (I,1,19).⁴³⁰ Maybe this poem was originally preceded by I,1,13 (an enumeration of the patriarchs): the patriarchs were seen as prefiguration of the apostles. The word $\alpha\lambda$ in the first line of I,1,19 would sustain this connection between the two poems.⁴³¹ Matthias is not mentioned in I,1,19 (nor is Nathanael; Thaddeus is called Judas): Gregory only refers to the twelve original disciples and to Paul. He seems to follow the apostle list in Luke 6.14–6, but reverses the position of both John and James and the pair of Judas (son of James) and Simon. This poem clearly is a poem with a didactic purpose: a mnemonic aid to remember the names of all apostles.⁴³² Apparently, the apostles who are mentioned only here in his oeuvre did not interest Gregory.

The $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\chi\omega\nu$ is not fully included in the analysis of Gregory's poetry. Apart from the *communis opinio* according to which the poem is medieval, a quick look at the representation of the apostles in the tragedy does barely show similarities with the representation found in poems that can securely be attributed to Gregory. In the $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\chi\omega\nu$, the word $\mu\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$ —never used by Gregory to refer to the apostles—is employed in most cases where the author intended to indicate them, whereas $\mu\alpha\theta\eta\tau\alpha\acute{\iota}$ (cf. below) is only rarely used. The word $\delta\pi\alpha\delta\acute{o}\varsigma$ meaning 'apostle' is never found in Gregory's poetry, but applied several times in the tragedy. The vehement diatribes against Judas in the

430 Implicitly, Gregory refers to James in I,1,20 24, see 1.9.4).

431 Palla (1989) supposes that the original order of Gregory's poems did not correspond with the sequence in Migne. He proposes a different order of the poems I,1,12–27, since they form a unity that is also attested in the manuscripts (except for I,1,16–7): "un manualetto, magari di scarso pregio letterario, ma—almeno per il cristiano di quei tempi—di indubbia utilità pratica" (p. 185). Palla suggests the following order (see pp. 178 and 181): I,1,12–14–15–13–19–18a (1–59)–18b (60–102)–20–24, 21 (1–16)–25 (1–2 and 4)–25 (5/6 + 22,3–20)–26–23–27. On the basis of this "vero e proprio disegno catechetico" (p. 172), Palla hypothesises that this order was arranged by Gregory himself. Sicherl (2002) 313–4 defends the unity of poem 18.

432 Poems like these (cf. also the poems enumerating the miracles performed by Jesus in each of the canonical Gospels) had a parallel in classical poems enumerating the works of Hercules, see Prudhomme (2006) 307–8.

tragedy do not fit the severe, but still measured judgements about Judas found in Gregory's poetry. The important role for the apostle John (consequently described as *παρθένος*) in the tragic play, is not attested in the rest of the poetry either. Therefore, the representation of the apostles in the *Χριστὸς πάσχων* confirms the doubts about its authenticity.⁴³³

1.9.2 *The Apostles as a Group*

The apostles as a group are mentioned more often in the *Carmina dogmatica* and *moralia* than in Gregory's other poems. This might be a result of the didactic nature of these verses. The apostles were the pupils of Christ and accompanied him on earth: they were suitable examples for Christian education. However, Gregory never hints at these aspects of the apostles' life. In his didactic poetry, he uses wisdom literature that can be found in the Bible, like the Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7).⁴³⁴ He does not make use of the Biblical setting of Jesus as a teacher of his disciples to create a didactic narrative in his poetry. The apostles are presented as examples of good Christians who should be followed by Gregory's contemporaries. Nevertheless, among the many different nouns employed by Gregory to indicate the apostles, only one is used more than two times: *μαθηταί* (eight times), the Greek noun for 'pupils', which is also used in the New Testament.⁴³⁵

Most of the times, *μαθηταί* is used in an impartial context, to indicate the apostles (1,1,19 1; 1,2,1 681; 1,2,28 356; 11,1,12 222). The miracle of Jesus who saves his disciples in the storm at sea (Matt 8.23–7) is mentioned five times in Gregory's poems (1,1,23 7; 1,2,25 61; 11,1,1 11, intermingled with the story of Jesus walking on the waves; 11,1,69 and 11,1,83 26). In all these passages the apostles are indicated as *μαθηταί* (except for 11,1,69 where Gregory refers to the event,

433 For *μύσται* indicating the apostles, see e.g. *Χριστὸς πάσχων* 140 (sg.), 154, 158, 173, 306, 1166 (sg.), 1936, 1940, 2086, 2132, 2427, 2429 (sg.), 2481; *ὁπαδός*: 1168 (sg.), 1860, 1911; *μαθηταί*: 156, 1869. For the most vehement diatribes against Judas, see esp.: 267–357, 1419–42 and 1690–9. For John as *παρθένος* see: 728, 983, 1148–9, 1792, 2429. Through intercession of Mary, Peter—whose repentance is elaborately described—is exempted from any guilt by Christ himself (812–26).

434 Ackermann (1903) 31.

435 In addition, Gregory once refers to the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, which is mentioned as *μεγάλαυχον ἔδος Χριστοῦ μαθητῶν* (11,1,16 59). Some scholars consider this passage to be spurious, see Crimi & Costa (1999) 118 (note 9). The word *μαθηταί* is also used by Gregory for other pupils than the disciples: e.g. 1,2,25 226; 344 and 11,2,3 79.

but does not mention the apostles).⁴³⁶ Whereas 1,1,23 is an enumeration of the miracles mentioned in the Gospel of John, in the other four poems, different in length and topic, the story is used as an example of God's help to Christians, which is asked for to be repeated in Gregory's time.⁴³⁷

There is also an epigram (the only one in which the apostles are mentioned) about this episode. The epigram seems to have been engraved in Caesarea in the church of St. Basil (the poem has been attributed to Basil of Caesarea in some manuscripts), since a note added to the poem reads: 'Ἐν Καισαρείᾳ εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ ἁγίου Βασιλείου.⁴³⁸ It might have functioned as a *titulus*, similar to the captions in verse written by Ambrose, Prudentius and Paulinus (*Introduction* 4.2.2.1). The apostles are indicated as πλωτῆρες (v. 3) and the rather trivial οἱ παρεόντες (v. 6). Gregory emphasises the fear of the sailors by adding δέματι in comparison with the gospels. In line 6, he stresses God's divinity (θαύματι δὲ φράζοντο θεοῦ φύσιν οἱ παρεόντες: 'and by the miracle those who were present perceived God's nature'). Jesus' reproach to the apostles about their lack of faith—which is present in all three Biblical versions of the story—has been omitted.⁴³⁹

In another poem about the same passage (1,2,25 61), the words the apostles spoke to Jesus when they were in distress are provided as an example how to pray to Christ (i.e. to control rising anger). The Biblical fact that the disciples did not have enough faith to trust on Christ without disturbing him (Matt 8.26), is never mentioned by Gregory.

In one passage, the apostles serve as an example of the good faith that should be followed by a (future) bishop: Δός μοι τὸ πιστὸν τῶν ἀποστόλων ἑνός (...),

436 The Biblical text probably influenced Gregory: the only noun by which the apostles are indicated in this passage of the Gospels is μαθηταί (see Matt 8.23 and Luke 8.22).

437 In 1,1,23 the verb ἐξεσάωσε adds an epic (homeric) flavour to the poem and the apostles. However, the conclusion drawn by Prudhomme (2006), who signalled this on the basis of several examples, does not seem to account for the apostles in Gregory's oeuvre as a whole (p. 307): "Cette mise en valeur des figures bibliques donne le sentiment que Grégoire veut présenter Jésus ou les figures bibliques comme de nouveaux héros, qui remplaceraient les héros païens comme Héraclès." Since only few stories in which the apostles play a significant role occur in Gregory's poetry, they cannot be added to the "figures bibliques" mentioned by Prudhomme.

438 Book VIII of the *Anthologia Palatina* consists entirely of Gregory's poetry; this is his only poem to be found elsewhere in the *AP* (1,92), since it appears not on his name but anonymously. The poem is also included in the *Carmina dogmatica* (1,1,28).

439 Therefore, I do not share the judgement of Palla (1989) 173 about Gregory's method used in the poem ("assoluta aderenza al testo biblico"). For the attribution of the poem see id. 172–3.

‘Give me the faith of one of the apostles.’ This verse (v. 199) is part of the poem “About himself and to the bishops” (Εἰς ἑαυτὸν καὶ περὶ ἐπισκόπων, 11,1,12) in which Gregory discusses, among other things, the (alleged) lack of education of the apostles. The poem is addressed to a fictive opponent (hinted at for the first time in line 29). In vv. 176–191 Gregory demands the bishopric to be occupied by the best men who can be found: (...) τῶν [δ'] ἀρίστων ἐκλέγω / τὸν πρῶτον (vv. 181–2). In vv. 192–205 Gregory refutes the counterargument which is to be expected: of course, the apostles and evangelists were simple, humble people, but they had other qualities that counterbalanced their lack of learning:

Ἄλλ' οἱ τελῶναι χ' ἀλειεῖς ἤκουσί μοι,
 εὐαγγελισταὶ καὶ πένητες ἐν λόγῳ,
 κόσμον σαγηνεύσαντες εὐτελεῖ λόγῳ
 195 καὶ τοὺς σοφοὺς λαβόντες εἴσω δικτύων,
 ὥς ἂν τὸ θαῦμα μείζον ἢ τὸ τοῦ λόγου·
 καὶ γὰρ πρόχειρον τοῦτο τοῖς πολλοῖς λέγειν.
 Πρὸς οὓς βραχὺς μοι καὶ σαφὴς ἄγαν λόγος·
 δός μοι τὸ πιστὸν τῶν ἀποστόλων ἑνός,
 200 ἄχαλκον εἶναι, πῆραν οὐκ ἐξημμένον,
 ἄραβδον, ἡμίγυμνον, ὥς δ' ἀσάνδαλον,
 ἐφήμερον, πλουτοῦντα ἐλπίδας μόνας
 μηδ' εὐπροσήγορόν τιν' εἰς δόξαν λόγου,
 τοῦ μὴ δοκεῖν θωπεῖαν ἰσχύειν πλέον,
 205 μηδ' ἀσχολεῖσθαι πρὸς λόγους ἄλλοτρίους.
 Τούτων τις ἔστω, καὶ τὰ πάντα δέξομαι
 (...)

215 Οὕτω με πείσεις τοῦ λόγου καταφρονεῖν.

However, the publicans and fishermen will come to me (sc. *in the arguments of Gregory's opponents*),⁴⁴⁰ the evangelists who were also lacking in education—they had caught the world with their paltry speech, and had taken wise men in their nets, in order that the miracle of the Word would be greater—since it is easy to say this to the masses. My response to them is short and very clear: give me the faith of one of the apostles, (the ability) to be without brass, not packed

440 This seems to be the only way to interpret the Greek on coherence with the context; the same translation in Meier (1989) 41, with notes (see pp. 96–8).

with a knapsack, without rod, half naked,⁴⁴¹ without a sandal, living from one day to the next, to be rich in expectations alone, not being favourably disposed towards some fame of speech, in order not to appear more strong in flattery nor to engage in alien (i.e. *non Christian*) speeches. Be there one of these things and I will accept all other (sc. *failures*) (...). In this way you will convince me to despise learning.

The phrase *τελῶναι χ' ἄλλιεῖς* clearly refers to the apostles: Matthew was a publican (Matt 9.9) and several other apostles were fishermen (cf. Matt 4.18–22). Lines 199–205 refer to Mark 6.7–13 (cf. Matt 10.9–10 and Luke 22.35): Christ's apostrophe of the apostles. In praising the apostles for having neither a rod nor sandals, Gregory follows Matthew and Luke, instead of Mark, according to whom both were allowed (6.8–9). The fishing imagery (derived from Matt 4.19 or Mark 1.17: *Καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου, καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς γενέσθαι ἁλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων*) in vv. 194–5 occurs several times in Gregory's oeuvre. In his poetry it is found in a poem versifying Christ's parables (I,1,27 26: *ἀνθρώπων ἁλιῆς*, 'fishers of men', who obey to Christ's commands (v. 25) and follow him (v. 27)), in II,2,7 23–6 (the apostles are 'fishing' through the power of the *logos*) and in a passage where frugality is praised: I,2,10 552–4; 555–6 (about Peter and Paul).⁴⁴² In general, the apostles are often presented as fishers of men in early Christian literature.⁴⁴³

Lines 555–66 of the latter poem ('About virtue', *Περὶ ἀρετῆς*), are very similar to II,1,12 192–205 cited above: the apostles are referred to as *πτωχοὺς* (...) *τοῦ λόγου διαγγέλους*: poor preachers of the Word (cf. *ἀπόροις* in v. 563). Their faith is mentioned in v. 561 and v. 566. Lines 562–3 and 565 almost literally refer to Mark 6.8–9. Verses 560–1 and 566 seem to be additions by Gregory, in order to emphasise aspects that are important to him: he often promotes an ascetic life in his poems.⁴⁴⁴ Poverty is presented as a great virtue in this poem (vv. 465–76). Moreover, in an oeuvre imbued with the desire to teach young or recently converted people, 'faith' naturally is a keyword. Another addition in II,1,12 is: *μυστήριον / ὅλης ἐπιτρέψας τῆς νέας οἰκουμένης* (vv. 563–4), '(Christ) had entrusted (his his apostles) the mystery of the whole new earth.' This seems to refer to the idea that God will create a new heaven and a new earth after the

441 Cf. *cento* 551 *nudati socii*, 1.3.2.

442 Cf. Oration 23,28 (PG 35, p. 1164), where Gregory states that he speaks *ἀλιευτικῶς, ἀλλ' οὐκ Ἀριστοτελικῶς*. See also Ackermann (1903) 54–5.

443 See e.g. Maier (1964) 97–100, including examples from Ambrose and Paulinus.

444 Ackermann (1903) 73. Cf. e.g. I,2,10.

Last Judgement.⁴⁴⁵ It emphasises the close relationship between Christ and his apostles.

In 11,1,12 the passage cited above (vv. 192–205) is worked out further in vv. 216–29. In v. 230 Gregory reproaches his enemy for calling the apostles ἀπαιδεύτοι. He points to the fact that the apostles must have been sages, since many people that have studied the apostolic texts all their life still cannot get but a glimpse of their real meaning (vv. 231–7). Moreover, the disciples spoke to many (educated) people, and could not have been able to do that, if they had not been learned themselves (v. 244: εἰ μὴ λόγου μετεῖχον).⁴⁴⁶ Gregory continues by saying that the apostles were also inspired by the Holy Spirit; if they are said to lack education, this is to say that the Holy Spirit does, which must be a mistake (vv. 245–52). Therefore, the apostles are undoubtedly wise (σοφοί, v. 252). This statement is repeated in v. 265, where the apostles are called εὐμαθεῖς, but Gregory adds that some of them were more capable of delivering speeches than others (vv. 265–6: εἴπερ τινές, / οὐκ εὐμαθεῖς δὲ τὸν εὐπρεπῆ πάντες λόγον). Presumably, Gregory was influenced by the Acts of the apostles here, in which only Peter and Paul are described as eloquent.⁴⁴⁷ In v. 286, Gregory refers to the eloquence of the apostles again, without distinguishing between them.

Several times (1,2,1 680–3; 1,2,3 48; 1,2,6 23; 1,2,15 107), the eleven apostles are contrasted to Judas, who betrayed Christ. Judas is sometimes compared to Lucifer (see e.g. 1,2,3 48 and section 1.9.5), the angel who turned his back on God. The contrast between Judas and the others is made very clear in 1,2,6,22–3: οὐκ Ἰούδας ἦν φονεὺς τοῦ δεσπότου, / ἀλλ’ οἱ μαθηταὶ δόξα; ‘Was not Judas the murderer of Christ, but the apostles his glory?’ Implicitly, the apostles are compared to angels, who were appreciated by Gregory as the creatures being most close to God and intermediaries between God and men.⁴⁴⁸ Maybe Gregory wanted to provide a stimulus for his intended readership: (young) Christians who did not have much knowledge of the Christian faith. Gregory also makes explicit that the apostles are not contaminated by Judas (cf. 1,2,15 107). This idea might have been used for the same audience: e.g. as a comfort to people after someone had left the Christian community.⁴⁴⁹ Gregory explains that the

445 Explicitly mentioned in Isa 65,17, 2 Pet 3,13 and Rev 21,1. However, the Greek employed there is different (γῆ καινὴ).

446 Λόγος has a broad meaning here, including all aspects of learning, see Crimi & Costa (1999) 84 and Meier (1989) 99–102.

447 Acts 4,13. See Meier (1989) 102.

448 See Ackermann (1903) 46–7 for Gregory’s opinion on angels.

449 Cf. for this idea e.g. Cyprian, *De unit. eccl.* 22,1–4.

angels were not defiled by Lucifer and compares him with Judas (maybe influenced by Luke 22.3) in 1,2,1 680–3, in hexameters:

Ἄγγελος ἦν τοπάροιθεν Ἐωσφόρος. Ἀλλὰ πέσοντος,
οὐρανίοις παρέμιμνεν ἔδον κλέος, ὥς δὲ μαθηταῖς
οὐδεν Ἰούδας ὄνειδος, ἐπεὶ πέσεν, ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ὦκα
ἐξ ἄριθμοῦ λογάδων, οἱ δ' ἔνδεκα μίμνον ἄριστοι.

Lucifer formerly was an angel. But, when he fell, his glory remained among the heavenly ones, just as Judas was no reproach to the disciples, when he fell, but he straightway was struck from the number of the elect, while the eleven best disciples remained.⁴⁵⁰

The apostles are elected people (λογάδων, v. 683) and eleven of them were very noble (ἄριστοι, v. 683). Gregory might refer to a passage from Peter's speech at the election of Matthias, where Peter makes explicit that the apostles were not harmed by Judas' presence among them. When Judas fell (i.e. when he betrayed Christ) he was immediately taken away from the other apostles: like Peter in Acts, Gregory thus emphasises divine providence instead of Judas' choice to betray Christ.⁴⁵¹ In another poem, this is expressed as Ἰούδας ἦν προδότης, οἱ δ' ἔνδεκα λαμπτήρες (1,2,3 48: 'Judas was a betrayer, the eleven were lanterns'). This passage hints at an idea very common in Christianity (as well as in other religions) about the good compared to light and the bad to darkness.⁴⁵²

Poem 1,2,1b 325, a "Praise of virginity" (Παρθενίης ἔπαινος), also praises the apostles as exemplary Biblical characters.⁴⁵³ Gregory stages the personified Virginity who defends chastity (vv. 355–727) against a chorus of married women (replaced by the personified Marriage in the course of the poem) who praise marriage (vv. 221–340). Unsurprisingly, given the rest of Gregory's

450 Translation by Gilbert (2001) 116.

451 Cf. Acts 1.16–7.

452 Among several passages in the Bible about light and darkness Matt 5.14 (part of the Sermon on the Mount) might be especially enlightening: "You are the light of the world", spoken by Jesus to his followers, including the apostles. In early Christian poetry cf. e.g. Paulinus of Nola *carmen* 19,80 and 24,143–6.

453 Poem 1,2,1 is now generally assumed to be a junction of two different poems (an arrangement which can be found in Syrian translations of the poem), see Sundermann (1991) 4. The date of the poem is unclear, maybe it was written in the years 370–2, see id. 19.

oeuvre, Virginity wins.⁴⁵⁴ It is not surprising either that the apostles appear in a text on chastity, but mostly they are mentioned for their statement addressed to their master in Matt 19.10 ('The disciples said to him, "If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry."').⁴⁵⁵ In Gregory's poem, however, they are mentioned in the speech of Marriage. She defends marriage by pointing at the fact that all good men in history were begotten in a marriage and she mentions several examples from the Old and New Testament. Among these, she also refers to the apostles (1,2,1, 325): Τίς (sc. οὐχὶ τέθηπε) δὲ δυωδεκάδα κλεινῶν μετέπειτα μαθητῶν;⁴⁵⁶ The twelve are (all) presented as illustrious here. With John the Baptist (v. 324) and Paul (v. 326), the twelve are the only New Testament characters that are mentioned: by contrast, no less than ten Old Testament examples are used in the passage (vv. 309–29).

There are three instances of Gregory calling the apostles φίλοι. They all occur in the context of the Resurrection. In a distich about Jesus' miracles narrated in Matthew (Τὰ Χριστοῦ θαύματα κατὰ Ματθαῖον, 1,1,20), Gregory mentions the Transfiguration as the seventeenth miracle: Ἑπτα δὲ καὶ δέκατον, θείην ἡλλάξατο μορφήν, / στράψας οἷσι φίλοις ἡελίοιο πλέον (vv. 23–4). According to the second part of the sentence, 'Christ had been more radiant to his friends than the sun.' These friends are the apostles Peter, James and John, the only apostles present at the event (see Matt 17.1–9). The Transfiguration was also mentioned by Ambrose in *titulus* 1 and in the *Carmen de ternarii numeri excellentia* 8: in all these three poems, only a short reference to the event is made, (one or two verses) with emphasis on the light emitted by Christ. In Gregory's poems, the word φίλοι is also used to indicate the eleven apostles after the Resurrection (when Jesus appeared to them in Galilee: Matt 28.10; 16–7) in 1,1,20 38. In 1,1,23 11 (Τοῦ αὐτοῦ θαύματα κατὰ Ἰωάννην), Gregory refers to the apostles and Mary Magdalene with ἑτάροι (cf. John 20.14–29; 21.1–22).

1.9.3 Paul

Three times, Paul is mentioned as the author of books of the New Testament. In 1,1,12 35 fourteen of Paul's letters are accepted in Gregory's list of canonical books of the New Testament. Gregory is generally not inclined to mention the authors of whom he cites a text. He makes an exception for Paul,

454 For the place of the poem in a long tradition of Christian literature on virginity, see Sundermann (1991) 14–8. For Gregory, virginity was a reflection of the ideal situation in paradise before the Fall, see Moreschini (1994) 26–9.

455 See Sundermann (1991) 81.

456 'Who is not astonished about the twelve illustrious apostles too?'

probably because he can benefit from the authority of the apostle to stress his own argument. In 1,2,24 (Πρὸς πολυόρκους διάλογος) about people who are used to swear, a practice Gregory condemns, Paul is referred to in a dialogue between A, being opposed to swearing, and B, who tries to understand why A is against it. B contends that Paul swore in his writings and cites Rom 1.9, Phil 1,8 and 1 Thess 2.5 almost literally (vv. 25; 27–8). A objects that these statements are confirmations (πίστωσις, v. 229), not oaths. If B had the same strength (σθένος) as Paul, he might also use these kinds of confirmations (vv. 231–2). Again, an apostle is presented as an example for later Christians.

In 11,1,12 517–21 Paul is cited to support Gregory's opinion that a bishop should not be installed on a whim. Gregory erroneously attributes this quotation to the letter to Timothy instead of the Galatians: he probably cited by heart.⁴⁵⁷ His reverence for Paul is expressed in his use of the adjective θεῖος. Paul is overtly presented as godlike, which strengthens Gregory's argumentation.

In 1,2,1 485–8 Gregory indicates Paul's limitations as well as his divine status. In an enumeration of the disadvantages of marriage, Virginitas emphasises that a man never knows what kind of children he will produce:

485 Εἰ Παῦλος τις ἐὼν χριστοκτόνον υἱὰ φυτεύσει,
 Ἄνναν ἢ Καϊάφαν ἀτάσθαλον, ἢ τιν' Ἰούδαν·
 οὐδ' εἴ τις κακίαν πεφυκὼς οἶός περ Ἰούδα,
 ἢ Παύλου ζαθέου κεκλήσεται, ἢ ὄγε Πέτρου (...).

If a man like Paul will produce a Christ-killing son, an Annas, or a wicked Caiaphas, or some Judas; or again, if someone evil by nature, like Judas, will be known as the parent of most divine Paul, or of Peter (...).⁴⁵⁸

Paul is presented here as the most improbable father of a 'Christ-killing son', but even he could get such offspring. Thereafter, Gregory reverses the argument: even the most evil father, Judas, could produce children like Paul and Peter.⁴⁵⁹ In both cases, Paul is presented as a model of the ideal Christian. It is significant, however, that the adjective ζάθεος is not used in the first example

457 Meier (1989) 130.

458 Translation by Gilbert (2001) 108 (adapted). Virginitas does not attribute children's behaviour to their parents nor does she blame marriage for it (cf. vv. 501; 518–9), she just reacts on an enumeration of examples of good children who naturally came forth from a marriage, given by her opponent Marriage (vv. 296–336).

459 Cf. for a similar line of reasoning, concerning the sons of Samuel, Timothy and Absalom, Asterius of Amasea *hom.* 8,2–3. Cf. Hier. c. *Vigil.* 9.

(how would a divine nature be able to produce someone like Judas?, vv. 485–6), but in the second (vv. 487–8).

In verses 496–501, Paul is mentioned again, as an example of men who bear two natures, one good and one bad. He is used as an example alongside Solomon (cf. *Comm. Instr.* 1,31, 1.1.1):

Καὶ Σολομών τὰ πρῶτα σοφὸς, μετέπειτα κάκιστος,
 ἡνίκα θηλυτέρησιν ἐφωμάρτησεν ἀλιτραῖς.
 Ἔμπαλιν αὖ Παύλοιο μέγα σθένος ἀμφοτέρωθεν,
 500 ὃς Χριστὸν μὲν ἄτιζεν, ἔπειτα δὲ πᾶσιν ἔφηγε,
 τρέψας εἰς ἀγαθὸν ζῆλον πυρόεσσαν ἐρώην (...).

And Solomon was wise at first; afterwards, he was worst when he had turned to sin, affected by womanish vices. Or again, Paul's great power appeared in both respects: first he dishonoured Christ, but then he proclaimed him to all, having turned his fiery force towards a good zeal.⁴⁶⁰

Paul's strength is mentioned (v. 499, cf. 1,2,24 231). Although he started wrongly, he ended well (εἰς ἀγαθὸν ζῆλον), contrary to Solomon who went the other way (μετέπειτα κάκιστος). At the same time, Gregory compares Paul to one of the wisest men in the Bible, which adds to the intellectual status of the apostle. Paul is praised for his 'fiery force' (πυρόεσσαν ἐρώην), a quality often associated with Peter.⁴⁶¹ Gregory again provides a positive account of Paul in this passage.

In the same poem, Paul was already praised earlier, in the speech of Marriage, who presented him as one of three examples of good men taken from the New Testament, see v. 326: Τίς (sc. οὐχὶ τέθηπε, v. 323) Παύλοιο μένος μεγαλήτορος οὐρανοφοίτου 'Who is not amazed at the strength of Paul, the great-hearted man who entered heaven?': the apostles (v. 325, see 1.9.2) and John the Baptist (v. 324) are also mentioned. Paul is often present in literature about chastity.⁴⁶² The word οὐρανοφοίτης refers to 2 Cor 12.2–4, a passage already referred to by Damasus, *ep.* 1,13–4 (see 1.5.4), and emphasises Paul's special status. The passage is referred to several times by Gregory, especially in his orations, but also two times in his poetical texts: 1,2,1 326 and 1,2,2 205 (see below).⁴⁶³

460 Translation by Gilbert (2001) 108, adapted.

461 Cf. e.g. Matt 26.33–5; Luke 22.33. See also Greg. Naz. *Funebris oratio in laudem Basilii magni* lxxvi b–c (Migne 36).

462 Sundermann (1991) 81.

463 Cf. Demoen (1996) 414 for passages in the orations.

Poem 1,2,2 202–9 is comparable to Damasus first epigram (see 1.5.4), providing a (short) poetical biography of Paul.⁴⁶⁴ Like 1,2,1, this poem is about chastity, and Gregory provides young women with a large number of Biblical examples (vv. 152–209), among which Paul also appears. After several examples from the Old Testament, Gregory pays attention to John the Baptist (vv. 187–9), Thecla (vv. 190–3, without a link to Paul), Susanna (vv. 194–201) and Paul. Gregory refers to Paul's writings in v. 202: Παύλου δ' αὐτὸς ἄκουσας 'After I had heard myself of Paul'. He hints at 2 Cor 11.23–7, where Paul tells what he suffered for Christ. Paul's sufferings are not made explicit. In verse 206, Gregory uses the parable about the kingdom of heaven as a net that catches different fishes (Matt 13.47). By doing this, he also links Paul to the twelve original apostles, fishers of men. He praises Paul for rejoicing in adversities (vv. 207–8).

The two apocryphal examples Susanna and Thecla mentioned above are some of the few examples of references to the apocryphal writings in Gregory's poetry (cf. 1.9.4). Gregory's mentioning of Thecla is not surprising, since he stayed in a convent devoted to her (cf. 11,1,11 547–9).⁴⁶⁵ The story of Thecla is found in the *Acta Pauli et Theclae* (a part of the *Acta Pauli* that has also been transmitted independently), but Gregory does not often use this text for apocryphal remarks about Paul's life. In 1,2,3 87–8 Gregory seems to refer to the *Acta Pauli et Theclae*. He advises virgins not to worry because they do not have a husband: God will care for them if they follow him (v. 79). Thereafter, he enumerates examples of God's care (vv. 84–90). He mentions Elijah (v. 86) and the Israelites (v. 90) as Biblical examples. He also refers to Thecla and Paul (vv. 87–89): Ὁρᾷς Θέκλαν ἐκ πυρὸς καὶ θηρίων φυγοῦσαν / Παῦλον μέγαν πεινῶντα καὶ ῥιγοῦντα προθύμως, / ἵνα σὺ μάθῃς, παρθένε, πρὸς θεὸν μόνον βλέπειν (...), 'You see Thecla saved from fire and beasts, and great Paul starving and freezing, so that you may learn, virgin, to look at God alone (...).' This seems to be a reference to the *Acta Pauli et Theclae* 21–5 (fire and hunger) and 33–8 (the beasts). However, a scene to which ῥιγοῦντα could refer is not found in this passage. Paul's prominence is emphasised by the adjective μέγας.⁴⁶⁶

The only poem in which Gregory certainly refers to an actual event of Paul's life which is not described in the New Testament is in 11,1,14 64 (Ῥώμη δὲ Παῦλος καὶ Πέτρος νικηφόροι) where he mentions the martyrdom of Peter and Paul

464 See Zehles (1987) 133–5, for a commentary which mainly provides parallels in pagan and Christian literature. For a parallel in Gregory's writings, see *Or. 2/Apol.* lii (Migne 35).

465 For Gregory's special bond with Thecla see Limberis (2011) 29. Gregory mentions Thecla eight times in his writings.

466 *Carmen* 1,2,3 is not written in a quantitative metre, see Mathieu (1983) 145–6. See id. 156 for vv. 87–9.

(*Martyrium Pauli* and *Acta Petri* 35–41). This was a popular theme in Christian poetry (cf. Ambr. hymn 12 and Prud. *perist.* 12). The martyr cult of Peter and Paul was probably less appealing to Gregory's audience in the East than to people in the West. Gregory provides no details: this lack of particularities is a recurrent aspect of his references to Paul. Events from his life—which is described more extensively than that of any other character in the New Testament (except for the life of Christ)—are not mentioned often and in few words only.⁴⁶⁷

Gregory refers to the *concordia apostolorum* on several occasions. In 1,2,10 551 Peter and Paul are mentioned together in a list of Biblical figures living in poor circumstances and called *μεγάλους ἀποστόλους*. Again, a reference to the world in the nets of God is made (vv. 552–3): Peter and Paul gave to the poor (vv. 553–4). This last aspect might have been meant to be literal as well as metaphorical: the apostles indeed gave to the poor (cf. Acts 6.1–4), but also distributed their spiritual “wealth”. In 1,2,25 222–8 Peter and Paul are mentioned together, but the emphasis is on Peter (see 1.9.4). Paul's frankness is praised in verse 224.

In 1,1,22 (Τοῦ αὐτοῦ θαύματα κατὰ Λουκᾶν) about the miracles of Jesus described in the Gospel of Luke, the bond between Paul and Luke is emphasised: Λουκᾶς (...) / Παύλῳ θαρσαλέος Χριστοῦ μεγάλῳ θεράποντι (vv. 1–2).⁴⁶⁸ The same words are used to express the bond between Mark and Peter in 1,1,21 1–2. Paul and Peter are both described as “great servants of Christ”. Peter's bond with Mark and Paul's relation with Luke are also mentioned in 1,1,25 5–6. Luke trusted on Paul, with whom he seems to have had a close relationship.⁴⁶⁹

In 11,1,11 680 (Εἰς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον) and 11,1,13 154 (Εἰς ἐπισκόπους) Gregory refers to 1 Cor 1.12, where Paul criticises disagreement among Christians. The first passage probably refers to the conflict about the allotment of Antioch's episcopate to Meletius or Paulinus at the council of Constantinople in 381.⁴⁷⁰

467 Cf. Demoen (1996) 413–4: the most important biographical detail about Paul that is only mentioned in Gregory's prose writings is the recognition of his discipleship in Jerusalem (*Or.* 42,1). I could not find Demoen's reference to Paul's shipwreck on Malta alleged to be in 11,1,11 111/120. I am not sure that 1,2,2 202–9 and 11,1,12 590 refer to *Acta Pauli* 3; nor that *Or.* 26,12 does, which is referring to canonical passages according to Moreschini, Crimi et al. (2000) 1302 (note 60).

468 'Luke, trusting Paul, the great servant of Christ.' Palla (1989) 183 seems to consider these lines spurious: according to him the first two lines of 1,1,22 should be 1,1,25 5–6 (as in Syriac versions of the poem), which seems a appropriate shift. Palla does not include 1,1,22 1–2 in the new order of Gregory's poems he proposes (id. 181).

469 Cf. Col 4.14 and 2 Tim 4.11; cf. also Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* 111,14,1 and Eusebius *h.e.* 6,25.

470 Tuilier, Bady et al. (2004) 163–4 (note 125). Cf. Jungck (1974) 181.

Another reference to Paul as a historical person can be found in 1,2,10 550, where Paul is said to have earned his own living (549–550: (...) τὸν ἐκ τέχνης τροφήν / Παύλον πορίζοντ' (...)).⁴⁷¹

1.9.4 *Peter*

Peter is mentioned almost as often as Paul in Gregory's poetry.⁴⁷² Several times, the two are mentioned together, e.g. as martyrs in 11,1,14 64 (cf. 1.9.3). This is one of the few moments from Peter's life that are mentioned by Gregory in his poetry. In his orations, Gregory refers to such moments more often.⁴⁷³

In 1,2,25 Gregory enumerates examples of people who constrained their anger and were προσφιλέστατοι θεῷ (v. 186). With Moses, Aaron, David and Samuel, Peter is the only one mentioned from the New Testament (vv. 188–9). Some verses after this passage (vv. 242–3), Gregory refers to Malchus (John 18.10–1) without mentioning that Peter cut off his ear. The bishop is clearly trying to depict Peter more positively than in corresponding passages in the Bible.

Gregory also addresses the Biblical passage of Gal 2.11–4 (1,2,25 222–8):

Πέτρου δὲ δῆτα τοῦ σοφοῦ τεθαύμακα,
ὥς μακροθύμως καὶ λίαν νεανικῶς
ἤνεγκε Παύλου τὴν καλὴν παρρησίαν
225 (καὶ ταῦτ' ἐν ᾧσται τηλικούτῳ καὶ τόσοις
ἐπαινέταις τε καὶ μαθηταῖς τοῦ λόγου),
ὥς συντράπεζος οὐ καλῶς ἦν ἔθνεσιν,
εἰ καὶ τόδ' ᾧετ' ὠφελήσειν τὸν λόγον.

I really admire how sage Peter patiently and very generously tolerated the beautiful frankness of Paul—and he did so in such a big city⁴⁷⁴ and among so many admirers and disciples of the Word!—, (who said) that he was not a

471 '(...) Paul, providing his own living from his skills (...)': Paul lived as a tentmaker for a while, see Acts 18.3, but more probably the verses refer to passages like 2 Cor 11.9 and Phil 4.11.

472 Three times, Peter is called by name in a entirely impartial way: as the writer of two canonical letters (1,1,12 37), as one of the apostles (1,1,19 2) and to indicate his mother-in-law healed by Jesus (1,1,21 2), since her name is not mentioned in the Bible (Matt 8.14–5). In 1,1,20 24 Gregory refers to Peter (and James and John) as φίλοι present at the Transfiguration.

473 See Demoen (1996) 414: Peter's vocation (3 times), confession, denial (2), presence at the tomb (2) and his attempt to walk on the waves are only mentioned in the orations, but not in Gregory's poetry.

474 Antioch.

commensal of heathens in the right way, even if he thought that it would be fruitful for the Word.

In the Bible, Peter is criticized by Paul, since he dined with the heathens but did not dare to show this towards the people of James. Paul did not criticise Peter for being a commensal of heathens, but for his hypocrisy (cf. καλῶς, v. 227). However, Gregory defends Peter by explaining that he acted with sincere intentions (v. 228). Moreover, Peter's wisdom and patience are praised (vv. 222–3); the latter quality is emphasised in vv. 225–6. By praising both Peter and Paul, Gregory tries to take the sting out of the conflict and to save an image of fraternity between the two most important disciples. Moreover, the passage is inserted in a series of examples concerning people who suppressed their anger. Gregory turns the possibly negative Biblical image of Peter into a compliment, omitting the aspect of ὑπόκρισις (Gal 2.13).

Galatians 2.11–4 was much discussed in antiquity and was used by some heretical factions to defend their preference for either Peter or Paul. The discussion between Jerome and Augustine became most famous (see Hier. *ep.* 56,3), but did not start before 393, after Gregory had written his poem. However, they both stood in an exegetical tradition. Jerome defended the Greek interpretation of Origen and others, i.e. that Peter and Paul simulated a quarrel in order to keep Jewish and non-Jewish Christians together. For Augustine, who followed Cyprian and Ambrose, this interpretation was an unacceptable corrosion of the veracity of Scripture.⁴⁷⁵ Gregory's interpretation fits a long exegetical tradition that aims at attenuating the conflict depicted in Galatians. The most striking example of this tradition is the tendency of some writings to omit Peter and to attribute the quarrel with Paul to Cephas instead, who would have been another apostle.⁴⁷⁶ Gregory chose the interpretation that Jerome followed after him: Peter thought to behave 'fruitful for the word' (v. 228).⁴⁷⁷

In II,1,13 154 (Εἰς ἐπισκόπους, cf. 1.9.3) Peter is mentioned to illustrate the disagreement among Christians in an adapted citation of 1 Cor 1.12: Gregory

475 See e.g. Hengel (2006) 92–105 and Posthumus Meyjes (1967) 5–11. Cf. Edwards (1998) 25–9 and Rinaldi (2001) 300–2. For the exegetical tradition in Antioch see Guinot (2001) 526–9. Moreschini, Costa et al. (1994) 204 do not refer to the exegetical tradition of this passage: "Si ha, qui, un'imprecisione." Cf. PG 37,829 (note to v. 227): "Videtur hic Gregorius a Scripturae in mente discedere."

476 See Ehrman (1990) 472.

477 Other passages where the Antiochean conflict is mentioned by Gregory (briefly and without displaying the controversy) are e.g. *Funebris oratio in patrem* xxiv b (PG 35) and *Contra Arianos et de seipso*, 11c (PG 36).

has changed Peter's Aramaic name mentioned in the Bible (Κηφᾶς) in a name more familiar to his readership (Πέτρος). In line 177, Gregory expresses his desire for unity within the Church by opposing striking examples of good and bad (cf. 1,2,1 485–8, see 1.9.3): Judas and Samaria are opposed to Peter and Jerusalem (vv. 177–8). This passage might be inspired by the Biblical note on the congregation of Jerusalem sending Peter and John to Samaria (Acts 8.14); this event takes place in the broader context of the conversion of the city by Philip and the attitude of Simon the magician who had first impressed the citizens of Samaria (Acts 8.4–25). By mentioning Judas in this context Gregory connects him with Simon who was considered to be the father of all heresies in early Christendom.⁴⁷⁸ Moreover, Simon was one of the principal opponents of Peter according to apocryphal literature (cf. also 1.9.5 and 2.2.2.2.3). These aspects seem more important here than Peter's status as the apostle of the Jews (in opposition to Paul, the apostle of the heathens).

Besides Paul, Mark is also connected to Peter. In 1,1,25 5 he is called Πέτρον φυτόν. In 1,1,21 2 Peter is called a “great servant of Christ” (see 1.9.3), and Mark trusts on him. Many Christian authors in late antiquity explain that Mark wrote his gospel under supervision or through the testimony of Peter.⁴⁷⁹

Peter's fame is emphasised in Πρὸς Βιταλιανὸν παρὰ τῶν υἱῶν (the third letter in the *Carmina quae spectant ad alios*, 11,2,3): in this probably fictive letter, a boy named Peter writes to his father Vitalianos in name of himself and his brother Phocas, since Vitalianos expelled them from his house.⁴⁸⁰ He calls to mind that his father gave them glorious names after their birth (vv. 79–80: κλεινῇσι... ἐπωνυμίησι.../...Χριστοῖο μαθητῶν), but now bears malice to them. The adjective κλεινός was earlier used by Gregory for the group of apostles (see 1,2,1 325).

Peter is more directly praised in “Praise of virginity” (1,2,1). In one passage, (for which see 1.9.3), the unpredictable character of children is discussed. Even good men, like Peter or Paul can bring forth wicked children such as Judas (vv. 487–9): “if someone evil by nature, like Judas, will be known as the parent of most divine Paul, or of Peter, the unbreakable rock, and be the father of the one allotted the key”, the Greek of the last part reads Πέτρον, / πετρῆς ἀρράγεος, γενέτης κληῖδα λαχόντος (vv. 487–8).⁴⁸¹ This is the only passage in which Gregory

478 See e.g. LThK 9 s.v. Simon 6 (Scholtissek).

479 See cf. Eusebius *h.e.* 2,15 and Irenaeus *Adv. Haer.* 3,1 and 3,10,5. In the Bible, the affiliation between Mark and Peter is mentioned in 1 Pet 5,13. Cf. Hengel (2007) 72–77.

480 The poem is analysed in Brodňanská (2012), who points to some manuscripts presenting Phocas as the writer of the letter instead of Peter (pp. 112–3).

481 Translation by Gilbert (2001) 108 (adapted). Peter is often mentioned in Christian literature about chastity and austerity, see Sundermann (1991) 148–9.

refers to Peter as gatekeeper of heaven (Matt 16.19) and one of the two which refer to Peter as the rock on which the Church is built (Matt 16.18). Gregory has used the word play Πέτρος-πέτρα effectively by juxtaposing the two words (cf. 1,2,12 222). Peter's perseverance is emphasised by the word ἀρράγχιος.

In a poem about the bishops (1,2,12) Gregory emphasises that even bishops with the same humble descent as the apostles should have faith in order to appropriately compare themselves with them. He refers first to Matthew (vv. 220–1), than to Peter (vv. 222–4) as examples: Πέτρος μαθητῶν ἄκρος, ἀλλὰ πέτρος ἦν / οὐκ ὡς σαγηνεύς, ἀλλ' ὅτι ζήλου πλέως· / πείθει με τιμὴν καὶ τὸ δίκτυον ὁ τρόπος.⁴⁸² Peter's zeal is praised by Gregory. In line 430 of the same poem, Gregory again plays with Peter's name. This line is part of a long passage in which Gregory complains about people who did not live a life according to Christian doctrine, but suddenly became bishop (vv. 371–431). By naming Simon the Magician (see Acts 8.9–24), he may be denouncing people who thought that an ecclesiastical position could be acquired without God's consent and support (vv. 430–1): Σίμων Μάγος χθές, σήμερον Πέτρος Σίμων. / Φεῦ τοῦ τάχους, φεῦ ἀντ' ἀλώπεκος λέων.⁴⁸³ But v. 430 also seems a conclusion of the passage.⁴⁸⁴ It is the sole passage in which Gregory uses Peter's original name Simon (which in the Bible is only rarely used): but he does so only to pun on the similarity of his name with another Simon, emphasised by the chiastic word-order of v. 430.

In 1,2,10 551 Peter is mentioned in a list of people who lived austere. After John the Baptist and Paul, Gregory calls Peter τὸν ἐκ θέρμων μόνων / τρυφῶντα Πέτρον: Peter lived from lupines alone, according to Gregory. Thereafter, Peter and Paul are praised as great apostles (see 1.9.3). There is no apocryphal story mentioning Peter eating lupines. Rather than a reference to a narrative, Gregory's remark points to a general picture of Peter as a man living in austerity.⁴⁸⁵ The only other reference in early Christian Greek to Peter eating

482 'Peter was the highest of the apostles, but he was not the rock because he was a fisherman, but since he was full of zeal: his character convinces me to honour his fishing net too.' For a commentary on the passage, see Meier (1989) 98.

483 'Yesterday Simon the Magician, today Simon Peter. Ah, how quickly, ah, instead of a fox a lion.' For a slightly different interpretation, see Meier (1989) 120–1. The phrasing 'yesterday x, today y' is used more often by Gregory, e.g. in *Or.* 22,5 (mentioning Judas) and 41,14 (Matthew).

484 Cf. Meier (1989) 116: "Die Aufzählung der Beispiele (...) wird 430 (...) kunstvoll zusammengefaßt."

485 Cf. Demoen (1991) 100: "L'histoire des lupins apparemment bizarre paraît donc être un τόπος de la littérature classique et byzantine, à comparer avec les haricots des ascètes. Il n'est pas surprenant de le trouver chez Grégoire: il est friand de pareilles images traditionnelles." Demoen offers the most extensive discussion of Gregory's references to the story of Peter eating lupines.

lupines is also from Gregory, in oration 14. The one detail added—compared to his poetic version—is that the lupines were bought for one *as*. Lupines were known as poor people's food.⁴⁸⁶ Thrift was a virtue that was frequently recommended by heretical factions⁴⁸⁷ and in apocryphal books.⁴⁸⁸

Gregory makes use of apocryphal writings, although he explicitly condemns the use of books that do not occur in the canon of Scripture (1,1,12 6–8), which he provides in the same poem.⁴⁸⁹ It is obvious that he knew apocryphal stories about the apostles, since he mentions the places where Andrew (Epirus), John (Ephesus) and Thomas (India) preached in oration 33. This information was in the apocrypha.⁴⁹⁰ In general, the Cappadocians did not give too much weight to the difference between apocryphal and Biblical texts, especially since martyrdom, which only rarely occurs in the Bible, was of primary concern to them.⁴⁹¹

1.9.5 *Judas*

Judas is often compared to the other apostles. Gregory addresses the question that naturally arises when one contemplates the group of the twelve: how could Judas be bad and the others remain undefiled? Did he not contaminate them? Gregory explains that when Judas fell, he was immediately withdrawn from the elected followers of Christ. Gregory often compares Judas to Lucifer or Satan: he also was a wicked creature in a group of elected ones, i.e. angels (see 1,2,1 681–3 and 1,2,3 48, 1.9.2).⁴⁹² Women who tried to remain virgin should not look at other women who had failed in this respect, just as the apostles were not upset by the betrayal of Judas.⁴⁹³ Gregory was the first Christian poet

486 Pauly-Wissowa s.v. Lupine (Steier), p. 1849 in particular.

487 See Schneemelcher (1999^{6a}) 46. The oration in which the story is referred to is called *Περὶ φιλοπτωχίας*: Πέτρος ἀσσαρίου θέρμοις τρεφόμενος (14,4). Peter's sobre diet is also mentioned in sermon 12 of Pseudo-Clement, most clearly in 6,16–7 (Peter is speaking): ὅτι ἄρτῳ μόνῳ καὶ ἐλαίαις χρῶμαι καὶ σπανίως λαχάνοις ('since I only eat bread and olives and occasionally vegetables'), see Junod-Ammerbauer (1975) and Rimoldi (1955) 214.

488 Bovon (2008b) 211.

489 Cf. Demoen (1991) 101–6.

490 Oration 33,11 (*Πρὸς Ἀρειανούς, καὶ εἰς ἐαυτόν*). See Gallay (1984) 316–8 for Gregory's use of the apocrypha.

491 Limberis (2011) 50.

492 In his orations, Gregory also compares Judas to Julian the apostate (4,68). Judas' death (as described in Acts 1.18) is compared to that of Arius in *Or.* 21,13.

493 See Sundermann (1991) 222. The Χριστὸς πάσχων (see 1.9.1) explicitly contradicts Gregory's attempts to find a solution for the problem of Judas' fall regarding his companionship

to address this question: this is yet another sign of the didactic nature of his poetry.

In 1,2,6 Judas is called φονεὺς τοῦ Δεσπότης (v. 22). In 1,2,1 486 he is mentioned with Annas and Caiaphas (cf. *Or.* 22,5): the main figures who contributed to Christ's execution. Judas is also used as a symbol of badness in contrast with Peter and Paul in vv. 487–9. The same occurs in 11,1,13 177, where Judas is compared to Samaria, in opposition to Peter and Jerusalem (cf. 1.9.2). Samaria is mentioned, because Simon the Magician worked from that city, according to Acts 8.4–25. Simon tried to buy the apostles' power with money (Acts 4.18–9), which might have been interpreted as a reference to Judas, who betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver (Matt 27.3, see below). In apocryphal traditions Simon became an important enemy of Peter and Paul in Rome.⁴⁹⁴ Elsewhere in his poetry, Gregory also elaborated on the opposition between Peter and Simon (1,2,12 430–1, see 1.9.4).

Poem 11,1,13 is the only poem in which Judas is called (θεοκτόνος) Ισκαριώτης. Maybe here the names “Samaria” and “Jerusalem” already caused the alienating effect Gregory mostly tried to avoid by leaving out Jewish names. Lucifer is again mentioned (v. 176: Ἐωσφόρος οὐκέτι λάμπων) close to Judas. In 1,2,15 (Περὶ τῆς τοῦ ἐκτὸς ἀνθρώπου εὐτελείας), a poem about the insignificance of the flesh of men, Gregory asks Christ not to yield to the temptations which led to the ruin of some Biblical figures (v. 109): Adam (v. 105) and Solomon (v. 106) are mentioned from the Old Testament. Thereafter, Gregory refers to Judas (vv. 107–8): Ποῦ δὲ δυωδεκάδος συναριθμῖος ἦν, ὃ τ' Ἰούδας, / κέρδεος ἀντ' ὀλίγου ἀμφεχύθη σκοτίνῃ.⁴⁹⁵ He is an example of someone betraying Christ for money (see Matt 26.15). Elsewhere in his oeuvre, Gregory frequently emphasises that Christ was betrayed for a little money only.⁴⁹⁶ 11,1,11 932 might contain a reference to Judas' death by the rope.⁴⁹⁷

In the list of apostles in 1,1,19, Judas is called οὐ φατὸς ἄλλος Ἰούδας (v. 5). The phrasing ‘ineffable other Judas’ (‘other’ because of Judas, son of James, also

with the other apostles, e.g. when a messenger says to Judas: μύστης φανείς σὺ συμμαθητὰς αἰσχύνεις (v. 195), ‘seemingly an apostle you dishonour your fellow disciples’.

494 Cf. e.g. *Acta Petri* 2; 5–6; 8 and *Martyrium Petri* 30–2: both are found in Schneemelcher (1999^{6c}) 258–85.

495 ‘Where is Judas, who was one of the twelve, who was enclosed by darkness for a little profit?’

496 See *Or.* 26,16; 29,20 and 36,5. Cf. also 11,1,13 61–3 (emphasis on the Pharisees who paid the money).

497 The passage is referred to by Demoen as “Judas hangs himself”, see Demoen (1996) 410.

mentioned in this verse) seems to be an invention of Gregory. In the gospels emphasis is laid upon his betrayal.⁴⁹⁸

1.9.6 *Matthew*

Matthew is most often mentioned as the writer of a gospel (1,1,12 31; 1,1,18 34; 1,1,20 1). As such, he is inspired by the Holy Spirit according to 1,1,18 13 (Ματθαῖος μὲν ἐγράψατο πνεύματι θεῷ, cf. 11,1,12 220). This poem (Περὶ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ γενεαλογίαν) expounds the genealogy of Christ and explains how the different genealogies found in the gospels are to be united. Matthew is called μέγας in the first line of the poem, whereas Luke is called φέριστος. This might be the result of a tradition symbolising the evangelists as the creatures described in Ezekiel 1.10 and Revelation 4.7: Matthew was symbolised by an angel, Luke by an ox. The adjectives in 1,1,18 seem to be appropriately added to the two evangelists. They might also have been chosen for their positive connotations in general.

The same adjective is also used by Gregory in 11,1,19 (Σχετλιαστικὸν ὑπὲρ τῶν αὐτοῦ παθῶν ‘Complaint concerning his own calamities’).⁴⁹⁹ At the end of the poem, Gregory declares that he is ‘worn out by suffering (ἄλγεσι κάμφθην, v. 83). He asks God to cure his sufferings, since God has proven to be able to heal people mentally and physically. Gregory provides three triads of Biblical figures. Three times he asks Christ to be the fourth (ὁ τέτρατος αὐτὸς ἔοιμι: vv. 93, 95 and 98). The first triad consists of tax-collectors who mended their ways. In v. 92, Matthew is mentioned first (before the weeping man in the temple, see Luke 18.13, and Zacchaeus, see Luke 19.12), with the flattering adjective μέγας. He is a Biblical example of God’s intervention on behalf of men, which Gregory evokes because he believes that God will forgive him and bless him too. Matthew is also called a tax-collector in 11,1,12 220–1.⁵⁰⁰ His profession is described as something condemnable; nevertheless, Matthew is to be respected for being filled with the Holy Spirit: Ματθαῖος ἦν τελώνης, ἀλλὰ τίμιος / οὐχ ὡς τελώνης, ὡς δὲ πνεύματος γέμων (cf. 192: 1.9.2).⁵⁰¹

498 See Matt 10.4; Mark 3.19; Luke 6.16.

499 See Simelidis (2009) 167–218 for the context and a commentary.

500 For Gregory’s references to Matthew as a converted tax-collector in his orations, see Simelidis (2009) 214.

501 ‘Matthew was a tax-collector, but he was honoured not because he was a tax-collector, but because he was filled with the Spirit.’

1.9.7 *John*

John is nearly always mentioned as the writer of a gospel (1,1,12 33 and 1,1,23 1) and of three letters in the New Testament (1,1,12 37). Gregory shares the general opinion in antiquity that John the apostle, evangelist and writer of letters were the same person.⁵⁰² John is only referred to as an apostle in the poem about the twelve apostles (1,1,19 2). Gregory mentioned John's nickname 'son of thunder' and his resting on Jesus' breast (both mentioned by Ambrose in his hymn to John, see 1.6.4) in his orations.⁵⁰³

1.9.8 *Concluding Remarks*

The representation of the apostles in Gregory's poems is not very different from that in Latin poetry. The lack of references to the martyrdom of Peter and Paul seems connected to the minor position of the old Rome in the culture of Greek poets at the end of the fourth century. Peter and Paul are mentioned (and praised) much more often than the other apostles. The didactic character of Gregory's poetry results in references to several stories that do not often occur in other poets' oeuvres. Peter and Paul are often presented as examples of good Christians. By contrast, biographical information about the two, which is relatively abundant in the Bible, is scarce in Gregory's poems. The apostles are portrayed several times as people who were aided by God: this aid was an example (in Gregory's view) of the assistance that later generations might receive. These features were useful elements for the audience that Gregory had in mind: young and recently converted Christians in particular, not necessarily belonging to the upper-class of the literary elite.

The apostles are most often mentioned as a group, especially in the *Carmina dogmatica* and *moralia*. The Biblical story of Jesus saving his disciples from the storm at sea (Matt 8.23–7) is described several times (1,2,23 7; 1,2,25 61; 11,1,1 11; 11,1,69 and 11,1,83 26). Gregory approaches the apostles in a positive way: he omits the lack of faith shown by them in the Bible. However, he does not omit, and sometimes even emphasises, their fear (cf. Juvenius, *evang.* 2,103–8). By repeatedly referring to the "sea-passage", Gregory points to Christ's miracles (which were far more important to him than the lives of the apostles) and the apostles' dependence on Christ. Their close relationship with God's son is also expressed in the use of the word φίλοι (three times), always in the context of Jesus' Resurrection.

⁵⁰² However, Jerome contends that 2 and 3 John were assumed by several authors to be written by another John (*senior Johannes*), see *uir. ill.* 18. He based his opinion on Papias, who allegedly was a pupil of John.

⁵⁰³ See *Or.* 32,8 and 43,76.

Despite Gregory's large oeuvre, most apostles are not mentioned at all: only John, Matthew, Judas, Paul and Peter occur in his poems.⁵⁰⁴

In several passages Gregory contrasts good and bad, in different forms: his hypothetical thought of Judas engendering Paul shows an original use of the apostolic representation that is barely equalled by other poets.

Humbleness and sobriety are also regularly mentioned by Gregory: his remarks are specific, but do not always refer to remaining literary sources (e.g. Peter eating lupines). The popularity of asceticism in the East—and the appeal it had to Gregory—might account for this preference.

1.10 Prudentius

Prudentius is generally considered one of the greatest poets of early Christianity.⁵⁰⁵ Biographical information about Prudentius outside his work is scarce. The *praefatio* of his oeuvre provides some details. Aurelius Prudentius Clemens was born in Calagurris (Spain) in 348, probably in a Christian middle class or elite family. According to the preface, Prudentius was 56 years old when he wrote it (*praef.* 1–3). He had worked as a lawyer (vv. 13–5) and he had governed two illustrious cities (vv. 16–8). Thereafter, the emperor had granted him a position at court (vv. 19–21). The description of his conversion (vv. 28–36) might be a literary topos, since it is the only indication of a pagan stage in Prudentius' life. Moreover, the name Clemens points to a Christian descent. Although Prudentius was a layman and probably did not intentionally write poetry for liturgical use—most poems seem to have been meant for personal contemplation—some poems might have played a role in liturgy.⁵⁰⁶

An exact dating of the different phases of Prudentius' career is difficult and has therefore led to heated discussions. He probably served for some decades

504 Similarly, other apostles are rarely mentioned in Gregory's prose writings. The inventory of Biblical exempla by Demoen (1996) mentions only one reference each for Andrew, Philip and Thomas. The other apostles are not mentioned in Gregory's entire oeuvre.

505 Cf. e.g. Fontaine (1981) 159 and Coşkun (2008) 295.

506 Charlet (1986) 372. Heinz (2007) 11 assumes that the poems were read "im Rahmen des Gemeindelebens", but does not provide further detail. He describes Prudentius as a *poeta doctus* who propagated Christian dogmas. Kirsch (1989) 216–8 examines the function of the poems of the *Peristephanon* and argues quite convincingly for the following tripartition: 1,3,4,6 and 13 for "außerbiblische Lesung im Gottesdienst", 2,9,10,11,12 for reading in private and 8 for "kirchlich organisierte Frömmigkeit". Cf. Cunningham (1963) 43–5. Palmer (1989) 229–33 points out that the use of non-Biblical texts in Mass was accepted in Gaul, Africa and Spain in the beginning of the fourth century.

at court, until around the year 400. The emperor whom he mentions in his work is probably Theodosius, but could also be Honorius: the latter was the only emperor whom Prudentius met and who was still alive when the preface was written. The preface mentions the *pietas principis* (*praef.* 20). However, there is no reason why this phrase could not refer to a deceased emperor, especially since the reigning emperor Honorius was from the same dynasty.⁵⁰⁷

Given the lively and extensive description of Rome, it is generally assumed that Prudentius actually visited the city. In his *Peristephanon* he only mentions Italian (mostly Roman) and Spanish saints. During his career, he probably stayed at the Iberian Peninsula (except for his period at court). Recently, Altay Coşkun reconstructed Prudentius' visit to Rome and concluded that he ultimately arrived in June 401 and left the city again in May 402.⁵⁰⁸ This visit is a *terminus ante quem* for his retirement, during which he returned to Calagurris. Prudentius wrote his preface in 404 or 405. Since nothing is heard or known about him after this period, he probably died soon thereafter. The sack of Rome in 410 would surely have left a trace in his oeuvre, had he still been alive.

Prudentius' varied oeuvre is even more influenced by the classical tradition than the work of contemporaries such as Ambrose and Damasus.⁵⁰⁹ At the same time, influence of Christian authors is also obvious.⁵¹⁰ Prudentius'

507 Döpp & Geerlings (2002) 598 date the court period in the years 384–404, Charlet (1986) 368 in the period 378/9–398/9. Fontaine (1981) 182–3 emphasises Prudentius' connection with the emperor Theodosius, as does Gnilka (2015). This idea is rejected by Coşkun (2008) using his chronological reconstruction of Prudentius' time at court (but Coşkun's theory results in an extraordinary verse production by Prudentius in a very short time, which seems improbable). Fontaine also assumes that Prudentius worked at the court for a long period. He had obtained this position "grâce à ce clan d'Espagnols et d'Aquitains qui ont constitué autour de Théodose de Cauca ce qu'on appellerait aujourd'hui les barons du régime" (id. 182). Cf. Palmer (1989) 24–31.

508 Coşkun (2008) 307–14. However, it might not have been the first time he visited Rome, see Roberts (2001) 534.

509 See e.g. Evenepoel (1979) 51–87 and Palmer (1989) 180–204. Prudentius' position towards classical poetry has been felicitously circumscribed by Rodríguez-Herrera (1936) 141: "Wie wir (...) gesehen haben, ist die Antike für ihn das Fundament, auf das er die christliche Poesie gestellt hat als Rivalin, nicht als Feindin der heidnische Dichtung."

510 Even influence from Greek contemporaries can be detected. Evenepoel (1994) points at some similarities between Gregory's and Prudentius' poetic oeuvre. She also acknowledges that the differences are many, however, (id. 100): "Prudentius is a Roman through and through and because of that he is very different from Gregory Nazianzus, the most Greek of all the Church Fathers of the fourth century." Furthermore, some of the similarities (e.g. common themes) might be due to the large oeuvre of both Christian poets (around 20.000 and 10.000 verses for Gregory and Prudentius respectively).

language is rich and varied, as are the different metres he uses. Throughout his oeuvre, the didactic nature of his work is clearly visible. His work is also characterised by “petits tableaux”, metaphors, religious symbolism and allegory.⁵¹¹ The innovative character of his poetry is seen in his transformation of genres specific to Christian prose literature (e.g. apology, dogmatic treatises) into poetry.⁵¹² When Prudentius spoke out on theological matters, he followed the traditional dogmas of the Church.⁵¹³

In verses 37–42 of his *praefatio*, Prudentius refers to the works of his oeuvre: the *Cathemerinon*, *Apotheosis*, *Hamarthigenia*, *Contra Symmachum* and *Peristephanon*. His *Psychomachia* and *Dittochaeon* or *Tituli historiarum* seem to remain unnoticed (see below).⁵¹⁴ Prudentius’ aim is to sing the glory of God (vv. 35–6: *peccatrix anima* (...) / *saltem uoce Deum concelebre*, *si meritis nequit*), which was a common motive for writing Christian poetry.⁵¹⁵ He also emphasises the function of his work in the combat against heresies and paganism and the propagation of the orthodox faith (*praef.* 39–42). With Juvenecus (*praefatio* 22–4), Prudentius seems to assume that his poetry will help him to gain a place in heaven in the hereafter (*ep.* 25–30).⁵¹⁶

Opinions differ on the question when Prudentius started writing poems. He is not mentioned in Jerome’s *De uiris illustribus* from 392, but Jerome himself elaborates on the restrictions on his work in the preface. At least, at that date Prudentius was not widely known.⁵¹⁷ The oldest manuscript of Prudentius’

511 For the latter see Herzog (1966). The first three characteristics are mentioned by Fontaine (1981) 188–9.

512 Kirsch (1989) 238–9.

513 Bastiaensen (1993) 114–20. Prudentius was especially swayed by the theology of Tertullian, see Charlet (1986) 376.

514 For the discussion about a possible reference to the *Psychomachia* in the *praefatio*, see Dorfbauer (2012) 59 (note 44) and 64 (note 74), who is not convinced that the reference is there.

515 *Praef.* 35–6: ‘With voice at least let my sinful soul honour God, if with good deeds she cannot.’ Cf. *Epilogus* 1–10 and 33–5, also Rodríguez-Herrera (1936) 26. Similar arguments are found in Greg. Naz. 11.1,39 69–70. Texts and numeration of Prudentius follow Lavarenne (Budé edition), whose text is based on Bergman (CSEL 61). The texts are collated with Cunningham (1966) (CCSL 126): significant changes are mentioned. Cf. Bastiaensen (1993) 101–8 for a discussion of the two editions. All translations of Prudentius’ work are taken from Thompson (LCL 387 and 398), with adaptations, unless stated otherwise.

516 See Gnillka (1979) 148 for some similarities between Juvenecus and Prudentius. Manitius (1890) is less intrusive on this topic.

517 Dorfbauer (2012) tries to date Prudentius’ works on the basis of their relationship with Claudian’s oeuvre. She considers the *Apotheosis* Prudentius’ first work, dated in 396/7, but she only investigates hexametrical poems in order to ensure a sound comparison with

work dates from the sixth century and is embellished with illustrations, which might go back to the fifth century.⁵¹⁸ The preface seems to have been intended to introduce an edition of (almost) his entire oeuvre. The position of the epilogue is unclear; in the oldest manuscripts it is placed in different positions. Its reference to iambic and trochaic verses alone might indicate that it was meant to accompany (a selection of) the *Peristephanon* and *Cathemerinon*. The end of the epilogue seems to be corrupt.⁵¹⁹

Prudentius' possible involvement in the publication of his oeuvre and the order of its works has been much discussed. Jean-Louis Charlet considers the edition to be "une sorte d'itinéraire spirituel" by which "le chrétien atteint la *perfection* intérieure et le salut éternel."⁵²⁰ This view assumes that the *Psychomachia* was included in the edition, which is not sure, as is stated below. Joseph Ludwig goes even further and defines Prudentius' oeuvre (except for the *Dittochaeon*) as one *Supergedicht* which presents Christian alternatives for traditional (pagan) literary genres.⁵²¹ However, the lack of contemporary testimonies about Prudentius—an intriguing fact on its own—becomes even more remarkable if—following Ludwig—it is assumed that Prudentius indeed undertook a project which aimed at changing a century-old school system in which all intellectuals of Prudentius' time, regardless of the degree of their attachment to the Christian faith, were raised.

Although Ludwig denotes some interesting cross-references within Prudentius' oeuvre, which indeed seem to suggest that his works were not randomly compiled, it seems improbable that Prudentius composed all his poems as a unity. Ludwig argues that there are too many internal references to ignore

Claudian's hexametrical oeuvre. Charlet (1983) 8 and Döpp & Geerlings (2002) 598 assume that Prudentius wrote poems from app. 380 onwards, without being very successful at the start. Charlet (1986) 369 suggests that he wrote his work (with the *Dittochaeon* and a supposed *Hexameron* as possible exceptions) during the years 398–404. Harries (1984) 73 proposes to date *perist.* 7 in the eighties of the fourth century, for which there is no proof.

518 Gniska (1979) 154 sees parallels between these illustrations and the design of the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius. Only the *Psychomachia* is illustrated, which reveals its special position within Prudentius' oeuvre and suggests that this poem was soon in circulation as a separate work, see Kirsch (1989) 242.

519 For an analysis of the epilogue, see e.g. Smolak (2002), rejecting vv. 29–35 as interpolation, and Gniska (2007c), especially pp. 459–65 and 473–80: the latter considers vv. 31–2 and 33–4 to be two different interpolations for vv. 29–30. v. 35 is generally rejected.

520 Charlet (1986) 370.

521 Ludwig (1977). However, unity within Prudentius' oeuvre and his personal involvement in a possible edition of his 'complete works' are two different aspects of the discussion, see Herzog (1992) 569–70, who nevertheless calls Ludwig's study "bahnbrechend" (p. 569).

and supposes that Prudentius partly planned his *Supergedicht* beforehand and partly created it after completion by revising some of his verses. In the insightful discussion following the paper in which he expounded his hypothesis, Alan Cameron suggests the most valuable explanation for the internal references in Prudentius' oeuvre as detected by Ludwig: "Might it not be considered just an elegant, logical and particularly happy method that he hit upon for arranging what material he had?"⁵²² Ludwig might be right in presuming some revisions by the hand of Prudentius. However, his comparison of the structure of the *Supergedicht* with the architecture of a basilica seems to overestimate Prudentius' preoccupation with late antique building styles.

Alternatively, one has argued for a tripartite structure of Prudentius' oeuvre: it would reflect the Christian daily life (*cath.*), the Christian dogmas (epic poetry) and the end of the earthly life (*perist.*).⁵²³ The text of Prudentius' poems in general is disputed. It seems that interpolations have been inserted shortly after publication.⁵²⁴

I will briefly introduce the different poems in Prudentius' oeuvre, in order to enhance a better understanding of the analysis in the following sections.

The *Cathemerinon* consists of 12 hymns for the most important liturgical moments of the day and the year, written in different metres. The hymns of Ambrose obviously inspired Prudentius. In the *Apotheosis* (1084 hexameters) the dogma of the Trinity is defended against deviating heretical views. The *Hamartigenia* (396/7–404?)⁵²⁵ is about the origin of sin and combats heresies, e.g. Marcionism. Both last works are part of the Christian didactic tradition to which Commodianus' poetry and the *De ternarii numeri excellentia* poem also belonged.⁵²⁶

522 Ludwig (1977) 367.

523 Von Albrecht (2003) 1078 who compares this subdivision to the work of Clement of Alexandria (*Protreptikos*, *Paidagogos* and *Stromateis*). Cf. Charlet (1986) 370. Fontaine (1981) 196–7 connects Prudentius' epic poetry with Theodosius' political aims: he aimed at creating the idea of a Roman citizenship including one Christian faith and one baptism. The diversity of Prudentius' work (in content as well as in style and metre) has also been interpreted as an evocation of God's omnipotence, see Charlet (1986) 372.

524 See Bastiaensen (1993) 101–8. Christian Gnilka contributed much to the textual criticism regarding Prudentius: see Gnilka (2000–2001), *Prudentiana 1*—in which he attempts to prove 247 verses of Prudentius' oeuvre to be interpolations—and discussion by Coşkun (2001).

525 Dorfbauer (2012) 63.

526 See Lavarenne (1961²), vi–vii. Cf. 1.2 and 1.6.3.

The *Psychomachia* probably stood in the middle of the collection.⁵²⁷ It exerted a considerable influence on mediaeval culture.⁵²⁸ In this allegorical hexameter poem, virtues and vices fight with each other. In the end, the Christian virtues win. Its date of publication is unclear, but has recently been estimated at the year 405.⁵²⁹

The two books of *Contra Symmachum* are presented as a response to Symmachus' *Relatio* 3, which pleaded the replacement of the altar of Victory in the Roman senate in 384 (cf. Ambrose *ep.* 17–8). Since they are probably written about twenty years later, it seems that Prudentius seized the famous quarrel about the Victory altar as an opportunity to meet pagan criticism which had increased after Alaric's intrusion in Italy in 401 (cf. Claud. *c.m.* 50, 1.7.2).⁵³⁰ The book seems to be directed to a Roman audience, but also addresses the emperor Honorius.⁵³¹ The first book is about the development of the pagan cult in Rome, the second refutes Symmachus' arguments. However, the two books have only little in common. Maybe *c. Symm.* was composed of separate poems, conveniently taken together for the edition of Prudentius' oeuvre. The prefaces then primarily functioned as connective elements.⁵³²

In the *Peristephanon* fourteen poems in different metres praise Spanish and Roman martyrs, including the apostles Peter and Paul (*perist.* 12). In this way, Prudentius continues the tradition of exalting martyrs in Christian poetry which was initiated by Damasus (see 1.5) and Ambrose (1.6). Historical

527 Since Prudentius does not explicitly refer to the *psych.* in his preface, its position is debated. Fontaine (1981) 150 suggest that he maybe wrote the *psych.* after finishing the preface. The poem is not found in the oldest manuscript (the *Puteanus*), see Bastiaensen (1993) 109–14 about the publication of Prudentius' work.

528 See e.g. Lavarenne (2002²) 41–6 and Mönnich (1990) 213–5.

529 Dorfbauer (2012) 64 (note 74).

530 Klein (2001) 347; Charlet (1986) 382–4. However, cf. the outburst in Gniska (2005) 76–7 against biased readings of Prudentius, also mentioning this case (p. 76). Fontaine (1981) 213 defines the *c. Symm.* as a “*retractatio* poétique” of Ambrose's response. He also points to three similar poems from the period 384–394, when in his view the conflict between Christianity and paganism experienced its last apogee (pp. 216–20), but see now Cameron (2011) for a deconstruction of the idea of a pagan revival at the end of the fourth century. Tränkle (2008) 44–8, referring to the *Saturnalia* that were also presenting an earlier period as contemporaneous setting of the work, arrives at a different conclusion (p. 48): “Die Überzeugung es handle sich lediglich um eine prinzipielle Auseinandersetzung, verdient in jedem Falle den Vorzug.”

531 Brown (2003) 18–20.

532 This hypothesis was recently expounded in Cameron (2011) 337–49, but cf. already Harries (1984). Cameron argues that one poem cannot be dated, dates another poem to 394 and the third one to 402, after the battle at Pollentia. Cf. Dorfbauer (2012) 65–7.

veracity was not of primary importance.⁵³³ The order of the poems within the *Peristephanon* is disputed.⁵³⁴

The *Dittochaeon* consists of 48 hexametrical tetrasticha, which were (presented as) captions of a series of Biblical pictures.⁵³⁵ It was not included in the edition.⁵³⁶ It is difficult to see a logical order in the *tituli*. Although a certain tendency towards a chronological and typological order seems obvious, it is difficult to explain the presence of all topics of the *Dittochaeon*.⁵³⁷ Renate Pillinger has tried to find examples of images with the themes described by Prudentius in early Christian art. She could find examples for all *tituli* but *ditt.* 23. However, the fact that corresponding images existed does not proof that the *tituli* did accompany such images in a church.⁵³⁸ Moreover, many of the pictures Pillinger found were produced at a later stage than when Prudentius wrote the *tituli*⁵³⁹ and the context of the images found by Pillinger is often

533 Mönnich (1990) 342–5; 350. Cf. Iwaszkiewicz-Wronikowska (2010), who assumes that Prudentius is a useful source for material culture, but can adduce only few cases in which the archaeological record confirms Prudentius' remarks.

534 Fontaine (1981) 191–2 explains the order generally maintained in modern editions. *Perist.* 10 is a peculiar case due to its extraordinary length as well as its varying position in the manuscripts: originally it seems to have been an autonomous work, see Fux (2003) 51–5.

535 For the *tituli* cf. *Introduction* 4.2.2.1. The name of the *Dittochaeon* is generally assumed not to be original, *pace* Bernt (1968) 69. Its etymology is obscure: *ochaeon* probably refers to the Greek word ἄγκυρα (anchor) or ἄρμα (chariot): maybe the double function of word and image is meant: these two elements combined formed a double anchor or chariot of the Christian faith, cf. Mönnich (1990) 177. Brockhaus (1872) 158 suggests διττὸς ἄγκυρα: food for the soul from the two Testaments, which seems most appropriate as a meaning.

536 Pillinger (1980) 42 assumes that the *tituli* only existed as captions when Prudentius wrote his preface. She considers the title of the work as well as the titles of the individual poems as later additions by someone editing an edition of Prudentius' entire oeuvre; in this case, the titles were not needed when Prudentius wrote the *tituli* because these were envisaged to clarify pictures, not to be read without them (p. 40).

537 Davis-Weyer (1986) has defended an old thesis emphasising typology in the *ditt.* In her view, the innovative nature of the work (not to be imitated until Ernoldus Nigellus, who lived in the ninth century, see id. p. 29) combining typology and chronology, resulted in a far-fetched and not strictly chronological coherence. She emphasises that Prudentius not only composed the *tituli*, but also contributed to the images and the overall programme of the cycle. Many valuable individual remarks notwithstanding, Davis-Weyer cannot present conclusive evidence for her hypothesis.

538 Rightly so Döpp (1983), esp. p. 230. Cf. Arnulf (1997) 69.

539 Arnulf (1997) 84 emphasises that 16 of Pillinger's examples are from the sixth century. Cf. Brenk (1983). At the other hand much visual material from late antiquity has been lost, which seems to justify Pillinger's method, see e.g. Argenio (1967) 44.

completely different.⁵⁴⁰ Potentially, early Christian art could have met all the subjects of the *Dittochaeon*, but no definitive proof can be provided.⁵⁴¹

Prudentius primarily wrote his oeuvre for an intellectual audience. He probably envisaged the Spanish elite in particular.⁵⁴² Especially with his poems in iambic dimeters (*cath.* 1, 2, 6, 11, 12 and *perist.* 2 and 4), Prudentius might have had the ambition to reach less educated people too.⁵⁴³ Jacques Fontaine suggested that the poetry of Prudentius and Paulinus of Nola was meant to be read by lay men in a way resembling the *lectio divina* which was executed in monasteries.⁵⁴⁴

1.10.1 *The Apostles in Prudentius' Poetry*

The apostles are absent from large parts of Prudentius' work, but do occur in a significant way in several smaller passages, especially *perist.* 12, *cath.* 1, the prefaces of the *c. Symm.* and in some *tituli*. The apostles are mentioned about 60 times in total.⁵⁴⁵ The apostles as a group are often indicated by the words *apostoli* (five times; eleven times individual apostles, often Peter and Paul together, are mentioned with the same word) and *discipuli* (four times; *discipulus*: four). Prudentius' allusions to the number of the apostles are especially striking.⁵⁴⁶

540 See Brenk (1983), but also Arnulf (1997) 92. Most images are from a funerary context.

541 See Pillinger (1980) 12–8, but also Gnilka (2009b) 83, with an intriguing example. For the authenticity of the *tituli*, see Pillinger (1980) 100. For Prudentius' view on figurative art see Fontanier (1986) and Gnilka (1979) 143–4.

542 See e.g. Palmer (1989) 278–9 with regards to the audience of the *Peristephanon*. Sidonius Apollinaris mentions that he found Prudentius' work on the bookshelves of a countryside nobleman (*ep.* 2,9), but it seems too far-fetched to deduce from this remark that Prudentius wrote for educated landowners on the countryside, for which see Fontaine (1981) 181–2 (also referring to the term *poeta rusticus* in *perist.* 2,574), followed by Charlet (1986) 374.

543 Rodriguez-Herrera (1936) 137. However, Mönnich (1990) 213 considers only parts of the *perist.* possibly suitable for liturgical use; he considers the *cath.* as an autonomous poem in the tradition of Horace's *carmina*.

544 Fontaine (1981) 143–60, in his chapter about Prudentius and Paulinus.

545 Overall their presence is rather restricted, cf. Rapisarda (1964) 621.

546 *Apostoli* and declined forms: *cath.* 12,180; *ditt.* 14,56; *perist.* 10,17–13,16; *psych.* 839. *Discipuli*: *apoth.* 970; *ditt.* 15,60; *psych.* 530–850. Numbers: *duodecim* (*ditt.* 48,193) and *bis sena* (*psych.* 839; cf. 843, 849–51 and *ditt.* 14,53–4). See also *perist.* 2,529, a quotation of Vergil, which was already used to refer to the apostles by Proba (*cento* 667). *Turba*: *c. Symm. praef.* 2,17. *Vectores*: *c. Symm. praef.* 2,22. Ludwig also sees the apostles and the Holy Spirit represented by their numbers in the structure of Prudentius' "Supergedicht" (his entire oeuvre except the *ditt.*), which consists of 39 poems, i.e. three times twelve plus three, see Ludwig (1977) 348–51 on numerology. Indirectly, there is a reference to the

In several cases, numerical references are connected to a typological reading of the Old Testament.⁵⁴⁷

1.10.2 *The Apostles as a Group*

In *perist.* 13,16, a hymn dedicated to the martyr Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, Prudentius praises Cyprian's Biblical exegesis and employs the term *apostolicis scriptis*. He seems to designate all books written in the apostolic manner, i.e. all canonical books of the New Testament.⁵⁴⁸ Which version of the Bible Prudentius used for his poems has been discussed at length by Charlet; he probably read a *Vetus Latina Hispana*.⁵⁴⁹ Charlet also rightly remarks, however, that Prudentius probably knew a lot of Biblical and apocryphal stories from oral tradition and referred to them without using a Biblical text. Exegesis, via catechism and liturgy, art and architecture (cf. esp. *perist.* 9 and 12; *Introduction* 4.2.2.1) undoubtedly influenced his poetry too.⁵⁵⁰

c. *Symm. praefatio* 2 is partly about Jesus walking on the waves during the storm at sea (Matt 14.22–33). The fear of the apostles is emphasised by Prudentius by calling them a *pallens turba* 'a pale crowd' (cf. Juvenius, *evang.* 4,785) and *vectores pavidi* 'anxious sailors' (c. *Symm. praef.* 2,17 and 21–22). Both times they are contrasted with Peter, who recognises his master and tries to approach him (see 1.10.4). Moreover, Prudentius describes the fear of the apostles in several evocative lines, composed as glyconics (c. *Symm. praef.* 2, 11–4):

Clamor nauticus aethera
plangens atque ululans ferit
cum stridore rudentium,
nec quidquam suberat spei
(...).

apostles when Prudentius mentions the *Symbolum* (*apostolicum*) in *perist.* 2,438. It might be significant that the only hymn in the *perist.* devoted to apostles is the twelfth hymn to the *principes apostolorum* Peter and Paul, like Ambrose also devoted his twelfth hymn to them. However, the order of Prudentius' poems, even that within the *Peristephanon*, is disputed.

547 Cf. Bovon (2008a) about the importance of numbers in early Christianity: Prudentius' poetry reflected common practice.

548 See Roukema (2004) on the term 'apostolic' for canonical writings, already attested in Tertullian. For *perist.* 13,16 cf. Fux (2003) 441 a.l.

549 Charlet (1983) 8–40. Charlet himself denotes the restrictions of his otherwise entirely convincing analysis, which is based on the *Cathemerinon* only. A note on *psych. praef.* 30–1 by Gnllka (2000a) confirms the use of the *Hispana*.

550 Charlet (1983) 83–149.

The boatmen's cries of woe and lamentation struck the skies amid the whistling in the ropes, and they had no hope left (...).

However, Prudentius also notes that the apostles are in a serious predicament (vv. 8–10, 15 and 17) and thus makes clear that he understands their fear.

The other cases in which the group of apostles is mentioned all have to do with the number twelve.⁵⁵¹ In several passages, Prudentius alludes to an allegorical explanation of Josh 4.1–9, where Joshua orders twelve men (one out of every tribe of Israel) to erect a monument in the river Jordan, which consequently consists of twelve stones. Prudentius makes the link with the apostles explicit in *ditt.* 15,53–6:

In fontem refluo Iordanis gurgite fertur.
dum calcanda Dei populis uada sicca relinquit;
testes bis seni lapides, quos flumine in ipso
constituere patres in formam discipulorum.

The Jordan with back-flowing stream moves towards its source, leaving a dry crossing to be trodden by the people of God; witnesses are the two times six stones which the fathers set in the river itself, as a prefiguration of the disciples.

The same story is versified in *cath.* 12,177–80, written in iambic dimeters:

Qui ter quaternas denique
refluentis amnis alueo
fundauit et fixit petras,
apostolorum stemmata.

And lastly three times four stones did he plant firmly in the bed of the back-flowing river, symbols of the apostles.

Cathemerinon 12 is the oldest Epiphany poem that is still known.⁵⁵² The exodus from Egypt is presented in verses 141–80: a passage as long as the story about the Magi in the same hymn. Moses and Joshua are presented as prefigurations of Christ (see vv. 143–4 and 173). Epiphany was linked to baptism and the

⁵⁵¹ In the New Testament, the apostles are often called “the twelve” already, see Sullivan (2001) 17. Cf. *Introduction* 1.

⁵⁵² For the background of the poem and a commentary on its complex structure see now O'Daly (2012) 352–80. Verses 177–80 are discussed on pp. 379.

mission among the gentiles, which Jesus entrusted to the apostles (see Matt 28.19). In this way, the apostles are connected to the story. They do not play any role in the rest of the hymn.

The passage might have been connected with the stones mentioned in Rev 21.14 too: 'The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.'⁵⁵³ Prudentius directly refers to this passage in his *Psychomachia*, when he describes the construction of a temple of the soul, after the good virtues have beaten the vices: *Portarum summis inscripta in postibus auro / nomina apostolici fulgent bis sena senatus*.⁵⁵⁴ In the exegetic tradition, the apostles are associated with the Church rather than with the soul. However, Prudentius seems to have used his poetic licence here.⁵⁵⁵ Lustre is added to the apostles by the words *auro* and *senatus*. *Senatus* might also refer to Christianity's triumph in Rome.⁵⁵⁶ Prudentius provides an exultant description of members of the Roman elite converted to Christianity in 1 *Contra Symmachum* 544–76. The motif of radiance (*auro, fulgent*), is also found in this passage: the senators are called *patres* (...) *pulcherrima mundi / lumina* (vv. 544–5). In the *Psychomachia*, Prudentius varies on the passage in the Book of Revelation by describing the names of the apostles as written above the gateways, not on the foundations. Maybe he thought that this eye-catching position was more appropriate to a passage in which apostolic magnificence was a central topic. Another reason may be the passage of Rev 21.12, where the names of the twelve tribes of Israel are visible above the gateways. Prudentius therefore probably refers to the analogy between the twelve tribes of God's people in the Old Testament and the similar number of the closest followers of Christ in the New Testament.⁵⁵⁷ The apostles become even more prominent in vv. 840–1, where it is said that the Holy Spirit encloses with their names the 'hidden secrets of the soul' (*Spiritus his titulis arcana recondita mentis / ambit*).

553 See Heinz (2007) 74–8. He also suggests that *petras* (*cath.* 1,179) refers to Peter; this is possible, but Peter does not play any role in the passage.

554 *Psych.* 838–9: 'On the tops of the gateways gleam the twelve names of the apostolic senate inscribed in gold.' See Gnlika (1963) 98–107 for an elaborated commentary on the whole passage (vv. 830–50). He also deals with the exegetical tradition regarding the twelve apostles in general and with respect to the passage in the Book of Revelation.

555 For the apostles and the Church, see Gnlika (1963) 101. For the poetic licence of Prudentius in this passage, cf. the statement of Lavarenne (2002²) 79 (note 3) about verse 850: "Mais il ne faut pas s'étonner qu'une allégorie manque de rigueur logique." Kirsch (1989) 257 refers to the different levels of meaning of the passage.

556 Also noticed by Smolak (2001) 353.

557 A similar idea can be found in *ditt.* 48,193–4: the *bis duodena senum sedes* (v. 193) refer to Rev 4.4. In this passage, they have been identified as the twelve apostles and twelve figures of the Old Testament, cf. Pillinger (1980) 116–7.

The number twelve frequently occurs in this passage: after three phrases—*bis sena* (v. 839), *quadrua... trinis* (v. 843) and *trinum quadrina* (v. 849)—the number is finally mentioned in v. 850: '(sc. the names which) the King (i.e. Christ) sets out in honour of his twelve disciples' (*bene discipulis disponit rex duodenis*). The apostles are praised by the Lord himself, which again amplifies their glory. The number 12 is repeated once more, indirectly, in *totidem* (v. 851). In vv. 851–62 the twelve precious stones in the wall of the temple are described in twelve verses.⁵⁵⁸

There is one other Biblical passage that Prudentius connects to the whole group of apostles: Exod 15.27. The twelve wells and seventy date palms that the people of Israel encounter in the oasis of Elim were often interpreted as prefigurations of the twelve apostles and the seventy (or seventy-two) disciples mentioned in Luke 10.1.⁵⁵⁹ Prudentius again circumscribes the number 12 (*sex ubi fontes / et sex forte alii*, *ditt.* 14,53–4) and explicitly mentions the apostles: *qui mysticus Aelim / lucus apostolicum numerum libris quoque pinxit*.⁵⁶⁰ The reference to the numbers is clearly allegorical. This *titulus* is followed by that on the stones in the river Jordan (*ditt.* 15): both *tituli* are about the apostles prefigured in the Old Testament and both have the same structure: two and half verse of description, followed by one and half in which the allegory is explained.

1.10.3 The Individual Apostles

Among the individual apostles, Peter and Paul are most often mentioned. The twelfth hymn of the *Peristephanon* is devoted to both of them, whereas most hymns are devoted to one martyr.⁵⁶¹ The two prefaces of the *Contra*

558 Cf. Gnilka (1963) 107–14.

559 See Charlet (1983) 22 for the tradition of Prudentius' exegesis, which goes back to Origen at least.

560 *Ditt.* 14,55–6: 'This mystic grove of Elim represented the number of the apostles in the Scriptures too.' The number twelve does not fit the hexameter. Apart from that, a separate study towards his use of number could be useful; cf. Vogel (2014) on the periphrase of numbers in classical Latin poetry.

561 With the exception of *perist.* 1 and 8. Peter is mentioned thirteen times by his name: *cath.* 1,50; *c. Symm. praef.* 2,1 (2)–2,23–2,32–2,47; *ditt.* 46,185; *perist.* 2,470–7,61–11,32–12,4–12,11–12,31. He is indicated four times by the word *discipulus*: *c. Symm. praef.* 2,2–2,47; *ditt.* 35,139; *perist.* 7,61. In *c. Symm. praef.* 2,41 he is called *famulus*, in *c. Symm.* 1,584 his ashes are called *genitoris amabilis obses*. Paul is called twelve times by name: *c. Symm. praef.* 1,1–1,20–1,30–1,61; *ditt.* 47,190; *perist.* 2,469–4,34–11,32–12,4–12,23–12,45–13,18. Four times, he is called *apostolus*: *c. Symm. praef.* 1,33; *ditt.* 47,191; *Ham.* 506–522. In *perist.* 2,461 he is named *vocator gentium* (cf. *perist.* 12,24 *gentium magistrum*, a designation derived from 2 Tim 1.11). Prudentius seems to consider the term *discipulus* appropriate for the first twelve pupils of Christ and to consider *apostolus* a broader term, meaning someone

Symmachum are also dedicated to Paul (book one) and Peter (book two). John is mentioned six times, Judas two times and Matthew and Philip only once.⁵⁶² The other apostles are never mentioned individually. Cults honouring other apostles than Peter and Paul only originated in the West after the fourth century. Moreover, Prudentius was mainly interested in Spanish and Roman martyrs.

1.10.4 *Peter*

The most prominent place of Peter as an individual in Prudentius' oeuvre is in the preface to the second book of *c.Symm*, written in *glyconii*.⁵⁶³ Whereas the preface to book one is devoted to Paul, in the second preface the main topic is Peter's disbelief when he is trying to walk on the waves (Matt 14.22–33). However, Prudentius goes beyond rephrasing the well-known Biblical story (in vv. 1–43). He uses it as a metaphor for his own situation in which he must face his pagan opponent Symmachus (vv. 44–66):

Sic me tuta silentia
 45 egressum dubiis loquax
 infert lingua periculis,
 non, ut discipulum Petrum,
 fidentem et⁵⁶⁴ merito et fide,
 sed quem culpa frequens leuem
 50 uoluat per freta naufragum.
 Sum plane temerarius,
 qui noctis mihi conscius
 quam uitae in tenebris ago,
 puppem credere fluctibus
 55 tanti non timeam uiri,
 quo nunc nemo disertior.
 Exultat, fremit, intonat,

who is sent into the world to spread the Word (according to the meaning of the Greek word ἀπόστολος). Peter is always called *discipulus*, Paul *apostolus*. The two apostles are mentioned together by the word *apostoli/apostolicus* in: *praef.* 1,42; *c. Symm.* 1,550–2,670; *perist.* 2,460 (*apostolorum principes*)-2,519–12,3.

562 John: *apoth.* 9–75; *cath.* 6,77–6,108–6,123; *hamart.* 911. Judas: *ditt.* 39,155; *psych.* 530. Matthew: *apoth.* 981. Philip: *apoth.* 120.

563 Commentary by Brown (2003) 84–92. See on the prefatory function also Pelttari (2014) 59–60.

564 *Et om.* Cunningham.

uentisque eloquii tumet;
 cui mersare facillimum est
 60 tractandae indocilem ratis,
 ni tu, Christe potens, manum
 dextro numine porrigas,
 facundi oris ut inpetus
 non me fluctibus obruat,
 65 sed sensim gradiens uadis
 insistam fluitantibus.

Thus a garrulous tongue
 carried me from the safety of silence
 on to uncertain dangers.
 I, unlike the disciple Peter,
 do not trust in merits and in faith
 but many sins toss me, shipwrecked, across the sea.
 I am very rash
 as, conscious of the night and living
 in the shadows of life
 I do not fear to trust my ship
 to the flood of so great a man.
 There is no-one more eloquent than he
 as he rejoices, growls, thunders
 and swells with blasts of eloquence
 It is very easy for him, to sink me
 as I am inexperienced in handling a ship,
 unless you, powerful Christ,
 stretch out a hand with your favourable divine will
 so that the onslaught of his eloquence
 will not drown me in its flood
 but gradually making progress
 I shall stand on the flowing waters.⁵⁶⁵

Prudentius can only resist Symmachus' brilliant eloquence (vv. 55–60) if Christ reaches him his hand (vv. 61–6), as he did to Peter when the waves threatened to engulf him (Matt 14.30–1). In this second part of the poem, Peter is praised as someone who could rely on his merits and faith (*fidenter et merito et fide*, v. 48; contrast *praef.* 35–6, see 1.10), whereas in Prudentius' case his own impetuosity

⁵⁶⁵ Translation: Brown (2003) 31–2.

brought him into danger (vv. 44–6 and 51–5). However, in the versification of the Biblical story in the first part of the poem (vv. 1–43), Prudentius mentions that it was of his own accord that Peter entered the waves (Matt 14.28–9, but see below)—although he asked Jesus for permission—and he failed due to his lack of faith (Matt 14.31).

Hilary seems to have influenced Prudentius in his hymns and by his exegesis on Peter's negation (see the commentary on *cath.* 1.47–54 below). In the first part of the *c. Symm. praefatio*, which is quite faithful to the original Biblical text, Prudentius versifies Jesus' reproach to Peter:

Mortalem Deus increpat,
quod sit non stabili fide
nec calcare fluentia
nec Christum ualeat sequi.

God rebuked the mortal man
because his faith was not secure
and because he was not able to walk on the water
nor to follow Christ.⁵⁶⁶

Although Peter's human nature—an excuse for his disbelief—is emphasised (*mortalem*, cf. *perist.* 7.63 and *ditt.* 35.139), Prudentius does not hesitate to criticise Peter here through the words of Christ, which is in accordance with the story in the Bible. Verse 40 is even added vis-à-vis the Bible.⁵⁶⁷ Similarly to Juvenecus (see 1.2.3.1), however, Prudentius does not use direct discourse (Matt 14.31: '*Modicae fidei, quare dubitasti?*' "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"). Peter is set as an example for the Christians of Prudentius' time: instead of using the name Peter, the more abstract noun *mortalis* makes the text more suitable to transpose to other contexts (cf. Ambrose's rendering of the story of the denial, 1.6.3).

At several other places in the first part of the poem Prudentius tries to provide a positive representation of Peter: he is called *summus discipulus Dei* (v. 2) at the beginning of the poem (cf. *c. Symm. praef.* 1.1–2).⁵⁶⁸ When the storm

⁵⁶⁶ *C. Symm. praef.* 2.37–40, translation by Brown (2003) 31 (adapted).

⁵⁶⁷ The same approach is seen in Juvenecus' versification of the passage: Juvenecus emphasises Peter's faith (*evang.* 3.119), but also Jesus' reprimand about his lack of belief (*evang.* 3.123).

⁵⁶⁸ Klein (2001) 345 considers *summus discipulus* to be a reference to the primacy of Rome. This might be the case, although one would rather expect Prudentius to use *primus* for Peter (for which cf. e.g. Aug. *serm.* 298 1.1) because of its resemblance with *primatus*.

has blown up and the other disciples are stupefied by Jesus' appearance (v. 22, cf. 1.10.2), Peter is described as *solus non trepidus Petrus* (v. 23)⁵⁶⁹ and recognises his master (v. 24). This image of familiarity between Peter and Christ is underlined again in vv. 29 (*notum*) and 42 (*et docet ingredi*). All these elements cannot be found in the Bible. Moreover, in Prudentius' account, the fact that Peter himself takes the initiative (without good reason, it seems) to ask to approach Jesus (Matt 14.28), is slightly changed. Although Peter himself asks for help to approach Christ (*notum subsidium rogat*, v. 29), through the phrase *iussus obsequitur* (v. 32) Prudentius suggests that Peter had no choice (cf. *ditt.* 35,137–8 below). By contrast, Hilary, in his commentary on Matthew, emphasises that it was Peter who took the initiative (*In Matth.* 14,15,8–9): *nam quamuis incedere ausus esset (...)*. In his exegesis of Matt 14.22–33, Hilary compares the ship of the apostles in the storm with the Church in the turbulences of time.⁵⁷⁰ This reminds of Prudentius' use of the story in the *praefatio*.

The opening verse of the preface is remarkable, since Prudentius uses Peter's Jewish name as the first word of the poem: *Simon, quem uocitant Petrum* (cf. Matt 10.2). Maybe Prudentius wanted to call to mind Peter's position as the apostle of the Jews, compared with Paul's apostleship of the gentiles, which is referred to in the first verses of *c. Symm. praef.* 1,1–7: *Paulus, praeco Dei*. The fact that Prudentius does not refer to Paul's former life as Saul makes it unlikely that he alludes to Peter's life as a fisherman or as a non-Christian Jew through the use of the name Simon. In verse 41 of the *praefatio*, the word *famulus* ('servant') is used to denote Peter.

Prudentius also mentions the miracle of Jesus walking on the waves in *cath.* 9,49–51 and *apoth.* 664–6, without making any reference to Peter. In two other passages, Peter's attempt is described: *perist.* 7,61–5 (in glyconics) and *ditt.* 35,137–40.⁵⁷¹ Peter's fear is made more explicit than in the preface:

Brown (2003) 86 argues for an indirect connection to Matt 16.13–20; Thraede (1965) 68–70 connects the preface with *perist.* 10, where he detects similar topoi.

569 This qualification finds its counterpart in *c. Symm. praef.* 1,33 where Paul is called *non intrepidum (...)* *apostolum*, see 1.10.5. Another verbal similarity between the two passages is the transition marked by *sic* in *c. Symm. praef.* 1,45 and 2,44.

570 Hil. Pict. *In Matth.* (SC 258) 14,13,6–14 (particularly 6–9, underlined): *Quod autem nauem conscendere discipulos iubet et ire trans fretum, dum turbas ipse dimittit et dimissis turbis ascendit in montem, esse intra Ecclesiam et per fretum, id est per saeculum ferri usque in id tempus iubet, quo reuertens in claritatis aduentu populo omni, qui ex Israel erit reliquus, salutem reddat ipse eiusque peccata dimittat, dimissoque uel in caeleste regnum potius admisso, agens Deo patri gratias in gloria eius et maiestate consistat.*

571 For the use of this story in Prudentius and its connection with the story about Jesus who calms the storm, see Charlet (1989).

Scimus discipulum Petrum,
cum uestigia tingeret
mortali trepidus pede,
dextrae subsidio tuae
subiecisse salum solo.

We know that your disciple Peter, when his steps were dipping in the water because, having but human feet, he was afraid, by the help of your right hand put his sole on top of the sea. (*perist.* 7,61–5)

It mare per medium Dominus fluctusque liquentes
calce terens iubet instabili descendere cymba
discipulum; sed mortalis trepidatio plantas
mergit; at ille manum regit et vestigia firmat.

The Lord passes over the midst of the sea, and as he treads with his foot on the flowing waters bids his disciple to come down from the rocking boat. But the mortal man's fear makes his feet sink. Christ leads him by the hand, and makes his steps firm. (*ditt.* 35,137–40)

Although the first passage is considerably shorter than the second, both texts are similar. *Mortali trepidus pede* and *mortalis trepidatio plantas* are clearly corresponding. In both passages, Peter is called a disciple. The context of the passage in the *Peristephanon* is significant. The hymn is dedicated to the martyr Quirinus. It recounts the martyr's death: people try to drown him but do not succeed. Quirinus prays to God to let him die and deserve martyrdom, since God had already proven that the waters bow to his will. Prudentius then has him mention the passage cited above, before the erection of the monument by Joshua after the flowing back of the river Jordan (*perist.* 7,66–70). This monument was often associated with the apostles (cf. *ditt.* 15,53–6 and *cath.* 12,177–80, 1.10.2). The two examples are not only chosen because they concern a miracle connected to water, but also since they belong together in a typological way. Moreover, a pagan hero with the name Quirinus was often equated to Romulus, to whom Peter was sometimes opposed by Christians as the new, Christian founder of Rome.⁵⁷²

In the passage from the *Dittochaeon*, Jesus is the main character. He might have been depicted most prominently on an accompanying painting. Peter's name is not mentioned, since the focus is on Christ's miracle. Prudentius

572 See Ruggini (2001) 387–92 for Peter and Romulus.

has omitted the fact that Peter took the initiative (*Dominus ... / ... iubet*, vv. 137–8) to disembark. The passage has a strong epic flavour through Vergilian references.⁵⁷³

Two other epigrams from the *Dittochaeon* tell stories about Peter which can be found in the Bible. Poem 45,181–4 (*Porta speciosa*) is about a miracle performed by Peter and John according to Acts 3.1–10.⁵⁷⁴ However, John's presence is completely omitted. Although the focus is on Peter in the Bible, John is mentioned three times by name (Acts 3.3, 4 and 11). In Prudentius, the paralysed man is cured exclusively by Peter (*nam claudus surgere iussus / ore Petri stupuit laxatos currere gressus*).⁵⁷⁵ The picture was undoubtedly meant to honour Peter, even if John might have been depicted at his side (cf. Paul. c. 20,241–51, 1.11.5). This *titulus* is also one of the verse captions that have been mentioned in an attempt to link the Prudentian *tituli* to pilgrim's literature.⁵⁷⁶ In several *tituli* objects and places are described which were actually venerated in the second half of the fourth century. Prudentius' interest in pilgrimage is revealed in other parts of his oeuvre (cf. e.g. *perist.* 12,59–66): he might have heard about the *porta speciosa* too.

The other epigram is 46,185–8 (*Visio Petri*), in which Peter's vision in Joppa (Acts 10.9–16) is described in a rather impartial way. Peter's embarrassment about the vision is not described; probably the vision was depicted with Peter's preaching among the heathens, mentioned in v. 188 (*immundas uocat ad mysteria gentes*).⁵⁷⁷

A story that had been told in poetry already before Prudentius, was that of Peter's denial. Prudentius refers to it in *cath.* 1.45–68. The first hymn of the *Cathemerinon*, written in iambic dimeters (the same metre is used in the Ambrosian hymns), is meant to be sung at cock-crow. The cock is a symbol for

573 Charlet (1989) 246–7.

574 Davis-Weyer (1986) 22 assumes a typological connection between this *titulus* and *titulus* 2 (*Aedificatio templi*): "Der Tempelbauer Salomo wird den Aposteln gegenübergestellt die—um mit Prudentius zu sprechen—durch ihre Predigt Tempel in Menschenherzen errichten." This would explain the emphasis on the location of the miracle (cf. 45,182: *egregium Salomonis opus*), but is an otherwise unusual typology.

575 Ditt. 45,183–4: 'For a lame man bidden by Peter's lips to rise was amazed to find his feet loosened and able to run.' For *laxatos* Cunningham (1966) reads *damnatos*, contra Bergman (1926), Lavarenne (1951) and Thomson (1961). *Laxatos* seems to fit the context better.

576 Baumstark (1911) 177–87. He also mentions *tituli* 4, 5, 15–6, 33, 38–9 and 44. Bernt (1968) 73 provides further parallels.

577 Davis-Weyer (1986) 24.

Christ and his Advent. Ambrose also wrote a hymn for this moment of the day.⁵⁷⁸ Both Prudentius and Ambrose mention Peter's denial, but Prudentius' account is more detailed (*cath.* 1,49–52; 57–64 vs. Ambrose hymn 1,15–6; 20; 25–8) and more explicit than that of Ambrose, who weaved the story through his poem. In contrast with Ambrose, Prudentius calls Peter by his name, in the central strophe of the poem (13).⁵⁷⁹ Like Peter who committed a sin (the denial) before the cock crowed, all people remain sinful until the advent of Christ (*cath.* 1,49–56). At cock-crow, Christ returned from the death (*cath.* 1,65–8). In vv. 57–64, Prudentius deals with Peter's guilt:

Fleuit negator denique
ex ore prolapsus nefas,
cum mens maneret innocens
60 animusque seruaret fidem.

Nec tale quidquam postea
linguae locutus lubrico est
cantuque galli cognito
peccare iustus destitit.

So he who denied Christ wept for the wickedness that fell from his lips while his mind remained upright and his heart kept faith; nor ever after did he speak any such word by slip of tongue, and when he heard the cock crow the just man ceased to sin.

As in Ambrose's hymn (1,15–6), the cock-crow undoes Peter's fault.⁵⁸⁰ Prudentius elaborates on this point and devotes two strophes to Peter's innocence, both when he had made his fault and thereafter. Whereas in verse 57 he is called *negator*, the passage ends with the qualification *iustus* (v. 64). The fault of the denial is described in two verses (vv. 57–8), the fact that Peter remained innocent nevertheless in two other verses (vv. 59–60) and Peter's innocence in the rest of his life in four (vv. 61–4). Thus, Prudentius eagerly tries to make clear that, even though Peter denied Christ, his soul remained pure (vv. 59–60). This

578 See 1.6.3, also for Augustine's opinion about cock-crow. Cf. the comparison between Ambrose's and Prudentius' poem in O'Daly (2012) 54–62, Fauth (1984/1985), esp. 114–5 for the representation of Peter, and Post (1984) 121–6.

579 Cf. O'Daly (2012) 57: "Peter in Ambrose is almost depersonalized as the rock of the Church (*petra ecclesiae*, l. 15) (...)."

580 The cock is a symbol for Christ, see Gnllka (2001a) 127–9.

idea was also propagated by Augustine and Jerome.⁵⁸¹ However, Prudentius primarily seems to have followed the man whose hymns he clearly knew: Hilary of Poitiers, who explained the passage in his commentary on psalm 52 (*In psalm. 52,12,16–36*).⁵⁸² Peter is presented as an example for all Christians in Prudentius' hymn: Christ is merciful for all men, even when they have sinned.⁵⁸³

In a hymn on Hippolytus (*perist. 11*), Prudentius makes Hippolytus (app. 170–236) wish that the catholic faith may flourish (instead of Novatianism) since it is the faith of Peter and Paul:⁵⁸⁴ *una fides uigeat (...) / quam Paulus retinet, quamque cathedra Petri* (vv. 31–2). Peter is directly connected with the episcopal see of Hippolytus' time, but the late antique reader of this passage without doubt thought of the contemporary Roman bishop as successor of Peter too. Moreover, the verse is remarkable because it blurs the horizon of expectation of the reader, assuming that after Paul, Peter himself will be mentioned, not the see he occupied.⁵⁸⁵ The Papal throne also appeared in art and a feast was devoted to it.⁵⁸⁶ Prudentius even uses the word *papa* in v. 127 (only here) to denote Hippolytus.⁵⁸⁷ The bond between Peter and Paul is emphasised by the anaphora *quam...quam*.⁵⁸⁸ The description of Peter in vv. 31–2 can also be found in *perist. 2,462–3*: *alter, cathedram possidens / primam* ('the other, possessing the first chair', see 1.10.6).

581 For the tendency to exonerate Peter, cf. Springer (1984) 50: "This sentiment reflects the process of glorification of the saints whereby they move from the plane of simple humanity and become an intermediary between man and Christ the stern judge." Id. discusses *cath. 1* on pp. 36–61. But cf. Rapisarda (1964) 626: "A giustificare l'apostolo, Prudenziò ricorse ad una argomentazione che certamente non persuade il lettore, per quanto sia accolta da Agostino." Cf. Aug. *Tract. in Ioh.* 66,2; *C. mend.* 6,13 and Hier. *In Matth.* 4,26,72. In modern literature: Lavarenne (2003⁴) 6–7 (note 2) and Herzog (1966) 61–2. Mönnich (1990) 236 (commentary on hymn 1 on pp. 231–7) considers exegesis on Peter's denial of minor interest to Prudentius in this hymn.

582 Charlet (1983) 104–6.

583 Cf. O'Daly (2012) 50: "Peter, so to speak, is Everyman."

584 Prudentius follows Damasus' interpretation (cf. his *ep. 3* and Prud. *perist. 11,19–20*), in which the Novatian schism is attributed to the period in which Hippolytus was bishop of Rome. However, Hippolytus died 15 years before the Novatian schism. He was involved in a schism with Callixtus I, which probably was the origin of the confusion, see Lavarenne (1951) 159–63.

585 Cf. Ruyschaert (1968).

586 Cf. Fux (2003) 355 a.l. More elaborately Pietri (1976) 1503–9 and Maccarrone (1962).

587 Smolak (2001) 356–7 suggests that this might be a preparation for the position of Peter in *perist. 12*. This seems to be rather far-fetched. For the use of *papa* in early Christian literature, see Pietri (1976) 1609–11.

588 Fux (2003) 355 a.l.

Peter is also mentioned in *perist.* 12, which is devoted to Peter and Paul together. In verses 31–44 Prudentius turns his attention to the San Pietro basilica. Prudentius might refer to Moses (vv. 33–4) when he mentions Damasus' construction of the watering of the baptistery (water out of a rock, cf. Exod 17.6 and Num 20.11). Moses and Peter were often compared (especially by Damasus, who saw himself as their successor)⁵⁸⁹ and the word *saxi* in v. 33 could be a hint at Peter.⁵⁹⁰

Peter's death is always mentioned together with the death of Paul (see 1.10.6). Only once, his death is described in a more extensive way: in *perist.* 12,11–20.⁵⁹¹ Peter's modesty is emphasised: first, his demand to be crucified upside down is mentioned (vv. 13–6), because he did not wish to surpass Christ by his crucifixion. Thereafter, the actual crucifixion is narrated (vv. 17–8): *Figitur ergo manus subter, sola uersus in cacumen, / hoc mente maior, quo minor figura.*⁵⁹² Prudentius again stresses Peter's modesty (and he does so once more in verse 19). Given the context, *figura* refers to the position of Peter on the cross.⁵⁹³ Modesty as a motive for Peter's inversed crucifixion was a commonly accepted idea in the fourth century, although it was not mentioned in the *Acta Petri*.⁵⁹⁴

Peter's relics are referred to in *c. Symm.* 1,583–4, where the popularity of his grave at the Vatican (*Vaticano tumulum sub monte*, v. 583) is evoked and his ashes are praised as 'a lovely testimony of the Creator' (*cinis ille latet genitoris amabilis obses*, v. 584). The popularity of Peter's tomb is presented by Prudentius as a sign of Rome's devotion to Christ, which cannot be doubted any longer (v. 587): *Et dubitamus adhuc Romam tibi, Christe, dicatam (...)?* Of

589 See Deproost (1990) 103.

590 See Fux (2003) 423. For other implications of the description, see 1.10.6.

591 The description of Peter's death is often more elaborate than that of Paul, also in the apocryphal acts devoted to both apostles, see Rimoldi (1955) 211.

592 'So he had his hands fastened below and his feet towards the top, his spirit nobler in proportion to his humbling position.' *Perist.* 12 is written in distichs, consisting of a greater archilochian followed by a iambic trimeter.

593 The word '*figura*' had many connotations in antiquity, see Auerbach (1944) 11–27 ('*figura*' in classical antiquity) and pp. 27–43 ('*figura*' in early Christianity). However, in this context the term seems to bear its original meaning 'figure' or 'shape', cf. Fux (2003) 420 a.l.: "proportionnalité inverse entre l'apparence et la réalité intérieure; cf. la comparaison entre pauvres et riches de *perist.* 2, 203–264. 289–292. **figura**: l'apparence (>13,28), ici la posture." This interpretation is more plausible than assuming that the text hints to Peter's appearance of a small man: Prudentius' remark would then be the only indication that this was the case; moreover, it does not make sense in the context of *perist.* 12.

594 Rimoldi (1955) 203–4 (note 33).

course, Peter's tomb at the Vatican and the basilica built for him were remarkable structures in early Christian Rome, but the passage also seems to reflect a deliberate choice by Prudentius to prove Rome's allegiance to Christianity by referring to the relics of Peter.

1.10.5 *Paul*

Paul's most prominent place in Prudentius' oeuvre is the preface to the first book of the *Contra Symmachum*, written in asclepiadics. The preface is closely connected to the preface to the second book, devoted to Peter. Although Paul's preface is considerably longer (89 instead of 66 verses), its structure is similar. After an introduction (vv. 1–6), a Biblical story is told (vv. 7–44: Acts 27.14–28.6), which is then linked to Prudentius' own time (vv. 45–79). The preface ends with a prayer for Prudentius' adversary Symmachus, lest he be burnt (vv. 80–9). The comparison with Saul, who also acted against the Christians before his unexpected conversion, forces itself upon the reader. Paul is characterised in a traditional way as the *doctor gentium* or apostle of the gentiles:

Paulus, praeco Dei, qui fera gentium
 primus corda sacro perdomuit stilo,
 Christum per populos ritibus asperis
 inmanes placido dogmate seminans,
 5 inmansueta suas ut cerimonia
 gens pagana Deo sperneret agnito

Paul, the herald of God, who first with his holy pen subdued the wild hearts of the Gentiles and with his peaceable teaching propagated Christ over barbarous nations with savage rituals, so that the untamed pagan race might reject its own rituals for the unknown God.

Paul is represented as the apostle who spread the Word (*praeco Dei*, v. 1). *Primus* (v. 2) corresponds to *summus*, a word used in relation to Peter in the same position of the verse in the second preface (c. *Symm. praef.* 2.2). Paul's style of writing is praised (*sacro . . . stilo*, v. 2, cf. vv. 60–1) as are his teachings (*placido dogmate*, v. 4), of which the tenderness is contrasted with the rudeness of pagan religion (*ritibus asperis*, v. 3).⁵⁹⁵ Verse 6 seems to be a reference to Paul's oration on the Areopagus, where he referred to the unknown God

595 Klein (2001) 341–3. Cf. Roberts (1993) 180; 183, who sees in verses 1–2 a military language that links Paul to the emperor (and the emperor, Theodosius in particular, to Paul).

for whom the Athenians had installed an altar (Acts 17.23).⁵⁹⁶ Paul is also praised as a writer at three other places in Prudentius' oeuvre: Cyprian's preference for his writings is expressed in *perist.* 13,18: *facundia / uoluminibus Pauli famulata*.⁵⁹⁷ In the *Hamartigenia*, Paul is mentioned twice in a passage in which Eph 6.12—about demons attacking men—is paraphrased by Prudentius. He first calls Paul a *doctor apostolus* (v. 506) and ends: *ut sacra nobis oris apostolici testis sententia prodit*.⁵⁹⁸ This praise of Paul implicitly competes with Prudentius' praise of Symmachus' eloquence which is found in the *c. Symm.*⁵⁹⁹

After the opening verses of the preface of *c. Symm.* 1, Prudentius first recounts the shipwreck of Paul and the other persons on board at Malta (Acts 27.13–44; Malta is not mentioned by name in Prudentius' poem). The storm is modelled on the storm at sea in the *Aeneid* (1,102–56).⁶⁰⁰ It has been suggested that Prudentius presents Paul as the new Aeneas;⁶⁰¹ both heroes aimed at bringing civilisation to foreign lands and at founding Rome. The parallel could be further strengthened by Paul's background as a Roman citizen (see Acts 16.37), but the reference remains implicit. The passage in Prudentius seems illustrative of the shift of Christian theological concerns in the fourth century: whereas Juvenius and Proba were the representatives of a period in which Christian thought was centred on Christ (in their work Aeneas found his Christian equivalent in Jesus), Prudentius' oeuvre reflects the growing importance of the cult of the saints in his time. The storm in *c. Symm.* seems to be easier to overcome than the one described in the Bible or the *Aeneid*. Only seven verses are devoted to it; God interferes and calms the sea (vv. 10–1, cf. *Aen.* 1,142–56 where Neptune intervenes).

596 Cf. the Vulgate a.l.: *praeteriens enim et videns simulacra vestra inveni et aram in qua scriptum erat ignoto deo* (...).

597 Smolak (2001) 358–62 might be right in suggesting that Cyprian is compared to Paul (cf. Robert (1993) 126) as Agnes is to Peter and that this parallelism contributes to the coherence of the structure of the *Peristephanon*. Cf. Fux (2003) 49–50. However, it remains difficult to decide whether Prudentius really intended this comparison. The argument presupposes that Prudentius himself ordered his work, which is uncertain.

598 *Hamart.* 506: 'the apostle who instructs'. *Hamart.* 522: 'As the holy words of the apostle's mouth testify to us.' Heinz (2007) 91–114 points to Rom 9–11 as an intertext for *apoth.* 338–46, although Paul is not mentioned. See Charlet (1983) 74–80 for references to Paul's writings in Prudentius' poetry.

599 Cf. Klein (2001) 344. The audience would of course be likelier to see the reference in the complete edition of Prudentius' works than in the separate works.

600 For the popularity of sea storms in ancient—pagan as well as Christian—literature see e.g. Rougé (1964).

601 Rapisarda (1964) 628.

Prudentius then tells the main story of the preface: Paul is bitten by a viper while looking for firewood, hurls it away and the viper burns in the fire, whereas Paul remains unharmed (*c. Symm. praef.* 1,20–44; Acts 28.1–6). In the Prudentian context, the story emphasises the superiority of Christianity over paganism.⁶⁰² The passage begins with Paul's name (v. 20), like the first verse of the poem. Prudentius extensively elaborates on the Biblical passage, but also omits some parts. He leaves out the Maltese. In the Biblical account the islanders take care of the shipwrecked people (Acts 28.1–2); they suggest that Paul is a murderer and that the viper that attacks him is a punishment of Dike (Acts 28.4); they also assume that Paul is a god after the viper has not hurt him (Acts 28.6). For a reader knowing the Biblical story—and such a reader was targeted by the poet—the third person plural (*conuectant* and *struant*, v. 17; *exclamant*, v. 31; *crederent*, v. 32; *adolent*, v. 68; *concremant*, v. 70) in Prudentius' versification is probably associated with the Maltese, even if they are not mentioned as such. However, it has been rightly pointed out that the people denoted by these verbs can be meant to be the other (pagan) people on board of the ship: this provides the poet with the opportunity to make an allusion to the parable of the vine and branches in John 15.1–11 (*c. Symm. praef.* 1,15–7; 67–72).⁶⁰³

Acts 28.3 (Paul attacked by the viper) is versified in vv. 20–8 without significant changes to the Biblical story, except for the addition of *incautam* (v. 22) as an adjective for Paul's hand. The end of the passage (vv. 37–44; Acts 28.5) is described in a poetic way and is longer than the original. In verses 29–37, the story of the Biblical text is changed by the addition of some details:

- Haerentem digiti uulnere mordicus
 30 pendentemque gerens Paulus inhorruit.
 Exclamant alii, quod cute liuida
 uirus mortiferum serpere crederent.
 at non intrepidum terret apostolum
 tristis tam subiti forma periculi.
 35 Adtollens oculos sidera suspicit,
 Christum sub tacito pectore murmurans,
 excussumque procul discutit aspidem.

602 Klein (2001) 343.

603 See Partoens (2003) 39–53, who scrupulously analyses differences and similarities with the Biblical model. Cf. Rapisarda (1964) 632. According to Paschoud (1967) 230 the people on board of Paul's ship (the subject of the third person plural in the preface) are both Christians and pagans: Prudentius wanted to point out that Symmachus was not even supported by the people he represented.

Paul shuddered as he lifted it (sc. the viper) while it clung to the wound in his finger, hanging on by its bite. Others cry out, for they suppose the deadly venom is spreading over his ashen skin; but the apostle is undaunted; the sudden peril in this grim shape does not frighten him. Raising his eyes, he looks up to heaven, silently uttering the name of Christ in his heart, and shakes the reptile off and casts it from him.

The fear, which one would expect as a normal human reaction for both bystanders and victim, is not described in the Bible, but Prudentius does pay attention to this emotion, which enlivens the story (vv. 30–4). Nevertheless, having stated that Paul shuddered when seeing the viper (*inhorruit*, v. 30), the poet also emphasises that the danger did not frighten the apostle (*non intrepidum terret apostolum*, v. 33). The last phrase seems to have a counterpart in the second preface, where Peter is called *solus non trepidus Petrus* (c. *Symm. praef.* 2,23). The suspicion of the Maltese people regarding Paul (Acts 28.4) is replaced by the fear of his fellow travellers. In Prudentius' description of Paul's prayer to God, the Maltese people of Acts seem to play a role again. In the Bible they believe Paul to be divine (Acts 28.6). However, by adding *tacito* (v. 36) as a qualification to the prayer, Prudentius adds to the internal logic of the Biblical story: since they did not hear him pray to God, it was even more reasonable of the people of Malta that they supposed that Paul had helped himself and therefore declared him a god (although Prudentius does not versify this part of the Biblical story).

Right in the middle of the poem, the focus turns from Paul to Prudentius himself and Symmachus (vv. 45–89), introduced by *sic nunc* (v. 45, cf. c. *Symm. praef.* 2,44). Paul's situation is compared to that of the Church, which he thought was finally safe after ages of perils, and suddenly was threatened by the viper which is Symmachus (who is not called by his name in the preface), in verses 45–75: however, it repulsed Symmachus' attack (vv. 76–9). Prudentius ends the poem with a prayer for Symmachus (vv. 80–9), in which the latter is clearly put on a par with the viper in the last verse (v. 89).⁶⁰⁴ This is to be compared with verse 44 about the venomous snake.

604 Tränkle (2008) 9 (note 6) rightly remarks that this prayer for Symmachus' salvation is confusing, since the poem is supposed to have been written in 403 at the earliest and Symmachus probably died in 402. For him it is "kaum verständlich" that Prudentius was still at court (where everyone knew Symmachus) when he finished *Contra Symmachum*. He might have returned to Spain at the end of his life. Brown (2003) 4 suggests that Symmachus' death was an incentive for Prudentius to write his *Contra Symmachum*, but

Prudentius' versification is an amalgamate of many different stories and elaborations: he versifies the Biblical story, compares Paul to Aeneas and his mission to that of Rome, attacks his contemporary Symmachus, but also condemns heretics who threaten the Church. While the story about Paul and the viper remains clear and easily recognizable, close reading of Prudentius' preface reveals that different lines of thought are combined in the versification.

Apart from the story about Paul and the viper, Prudentius also refers to the conversion of the apostle (cf. Acts 9.1–19). His description of a picture which might have consisted of several images runs as follows (*ditt.* 47,189–92):

Hic lupus ante rapax uestitur uellere molli:
Saulus qui fuerat, fit adempto lumine Paulus.
Mox recipit uisum, fit apostolus ac populorum
doctor et ore potens coruos mutare columbis.

Here one who was formerly a ravening wolf is clothed in a soft skin of sheep. He who was Saul, becomes Paul after he has lost his sight. Then he receives his vision again and becomes an apostle and a teacher of the nations and is able to change ravens into doves with his lips.

The same story was already versified by Damasus in his first epigram (vv. 1–10); he also emphasised the change of name and the aspect of light. Prudentius, however, shows his ability to embellish the story by adding the comparisons of wolf and sheep (*lupus* and *uellere molli*, v. 189)⁶⁰⁵ and ravens and doves (*coruos* and *columbis*, v. 192). Several elements of this epigram also occur in other Prudentian *tituli*: Eve is called a *columba candida* which becomes *nigra* after the Fall of Man in *ditt.* 1 and the raven and the dove are also mentioned in *ditt.* 3 about Noah. Whereas the raven is called *ingluvie* there, in *ditt.* 47 it is called *rapax*.⁶⁰⁶ The intertextual references contribute to the literary character of the *tituli*.

this seems exaggerated. Although critical, Prudentius still treats Symmachus with respect in the poem. He might have intended the prayer for Symmachus' soul.

605 For a possible parallel in early Christian art cf. e.g. a depiction of two wolves inscribed "elders" and a sheep inscribed "Susanna" in the arcosolium of Celerina (catacombs of Praetextatus) referred to by Malbon (1990) 195 (note 5).

606 *Lupus rapax* is also a designation for Benjamin in Gen 27.49: maybe Prudentius wanted to relate the apostle most recently added to Christ's main disciples to the youngest son of Jacob. The tribes of Israel—one of which had Benjamin as its patriarch—were frequently put on a par with the apostles.

Augustine preached about Paul's conversion in Carthage and also called him a wolf changed into a sheep by Ananias.⁶⁰⁷ Considering that verse 190 consists of the opposition of Saul and Paul, only 191 is without a pair of opposites: here, the word *apostolus* is used.⁶⁰⁸ Verse 192 recalls the power of Paul's preaching: Christians are more often described as doves. At the same time, Prudentius might refer to the depiction of the apostles as doves, which sometimes occurred in early Christian art.⁶⁰⁹ Maybe the apostles were depicted as doves on the picture accompanying this epigram. Prudentius also stresses Paul's wisdom and mission among the gentiles (*populorum / doctor*, vv. 191–2).

Paul's martyrdom is described in *perist.* 12,21–8. Prudentius seems to follow widely spread notions about Paul's death. His focus is on the new buildings erected in honour of the apostles.⁶¹⁰ Nero is depicted as a furious tyrant (*euomit . . . Nero feruidum furorem*, v. 23), which is not unusual;⁶¹¹ Paul is called *gentium magister* (v. 24), which is a common designation for him (cf. 1 Tim 2.7). However, he is also presented as a prophet who foresaw his own impending death (*non hora uatem, non dies fefellit*, 'neither the hour nor the day belied his prophecy', v. 28): this might reflect influences from Ambrose and the Bible. There might also be a parallel with *Martyrium Pauli* 6, in which Paul predicts Nero's death after the emperor has him executed. Nero is named in *perist.* 12,23 and the reader of Prudentius' hymn knowing the apocryphal story could easily be reminded of it.⁶¹²

607 See e.g. *serm.* 279 (279,2 in particular) and 299C,3. Augustine erroneously states that the name Ananias means 'sheep'. The apostles are called "sheep among wolves" by Christ in Matt 10.16.

608 Cf. Pillinger (1980) 114–5 for a detailed commentary on the passage. Id. 20 about the dove as a symbol for the Christian soul.

609 TIP 153–4 s.v. Colomba (Mazzei). Cf. 1.11.2 about Paulinus' *titulus* for the mosaic of the apse of the Basilica nova in Nola (*ep.* 32,10).

610 Palmer (1989) 254–5.

611 See Schubert (1998) 376–8 for Nero in Prudentius' oeuvre (where he occurs four times, always linked to the death of Peter and Paul).

612 See also 1.10.6. In Ambrose's twelfth hymn, Peter is called a *uatis* with regard to his own death (12,24), see 1.10.4. The Biblical passage is 2 Tim 4.6, referred to by Lavarenne (1951): "For I am already being poured out like a drink offering and the time has come for my departure." Lavarenne's other reference (Phil 1.23) seems less appropriate, the same is true for 2 Tim 1.11, mentioned by Mönnich (1990) 362. Cf. Eastman (2011) 16–8 for more Biblical passages possibly referring to Paul's death. For *topoi* in the *martyria* of Peter and Paul, see Gahbauer (2001) 166.

In *perist.* 12,45–54 the San Paolo fuori le mura is described and referred to as *titulum Pauli* (v. 45).⁶¹³

1.10.6 *The Pair of Peter and Paul*

Peter and Paul are often mentioned together by Prudentius. They are represented as the new defenders of Rome and the two outstanding representatives of the Christian faith in *Contra Symmachum*: a poem directed against the famous champion of paganism. Peter and Paul are for Prudentius the apostles *par excellence*, the only disciples to whom he devotes a poem in his *Peristephanon*. He deems them worthy to be explicitly mentioned in his preface: *Carmen martyribus deuoueat, laudet apostolos* (v. 42).⁶¹⁴ The twelfth hymn from the *Peristephanon* (*Passio apostolorum Petri et Pauli*) has as its subject the collective feast day of their martyr's deaths in Rome. By emphasising their harmony, Prudentius gains the opportunity to promote the authority of the Church as well as that of the empire. In the words of Michael Roberts:

At the same time, *concordia* had long been a catchword of Roman imperial ideology: the Roman empire assured an ideal harmony for its subject peoples. Prudentius' poem unites papal and imperial propaganda in a charter text for the Christian Roman empire, combining ritual enactment of the ideal *concordia* on the saints' common feast day, a schematic sacred topography of Rome—the two religious edifices on either side of the Tiber—and a foundation history of Christian Rome, in the martyr narratives of the two apostles, the *fundatores ecclesiae*.⁶¹⁵

Prudentius explains that both apostles died on the same day, but one year after another (*Unus utrumque dies, pleno tamen innouatus anno, perist.* 12,5). He does so through a fictitious bystander in Rome who explains to the first speaker in the poem (who is to be identified with the poet, verses 1–2), why a crowd of people overruns the streets of the city.⁶¹⁶ The feast day itself—noble through

⁶¹³ For the significance of this passage, see 1.10.6.

⁶¹⁴ 'May she (sc. *my soul*) devote a song to the martyrs, may she praise the apostles.' This passage, together with *perist.* 2,519–20, also confirms the difference between the apostles and other martyrs, see Fux (2003) 60.

⁶¹⁵ Roberts (2001) 559–60. See for imperial *concordia* in late antiquity Lønstrup Dal Santo (2015). Cf. Evenepoel (2010) for *concordia* in Prudentius. Even the metre (pairs of a grand archilochean and a iambic trimeter) might reflect the apostles' harmony, see Fux (2003) 416 (note 11).

⁶¹⁶ For the aetiological character of this setting, see Gnllka (2005) 61–3.

the blood of the apostles (*Pauli atque Petri nobilis cruore*, v. 4)⁶¹⁷ and honoured by their glorious death (*superba morte laureatum*, v. 6)—is the subject of the beginning and end of the poem (vv. 1–6 and 65–6). In verses 65–6 Prudentius is invited to introduce the feast in his homeland: *Haec didicisse sat est Romae tibi: tu domum reuersus / diem bifestum sic colas memento*.⁶¹⁸

This makes clear that the feast itself is Prudentius' main topic in this poem.⁶¹⁹ Verses 7–10 introduce the two banks of the Tiber, on which Peter's and Paul's martyrdom had taken place.⁶²⁰ Verses 11–20 and 21–8 are devoted to the death of Peter and Paul respectively. Prudentius then describes both banks of the Tiber in a more elaborated way (vv. 29–56).

Regarding the right bank, Peter's side, Prudentius emphasises more or less recent renovations by Damasus (vv. 31–44): There is an ongoing—and fierce—debate about the interpretation of the passage.⁶²¹ Christian Gnllka seems right

617 At first sight, the position of Paul's name before that of Peter is surprising, since Peter was martyred first (cf. *perist.* 12,11) and in general represented more prominently than Paul, see e.g. Deproost (1990) 108. Mönnich (1990) 360–1, however, has suggested that Prudentius probably wanted to avoid the harsh sound of the alternative phrasing *Petratque Pauli*. It is also possible that Prudentius followed a tradition according to which Paul was the first bishop of Rome, followed by Peter (mentioned in Eusebius and Epiphanius), see Gahbauer (2001) 159, but this seems less probable given Prudentius' general focus on Roman culture and his reference to Peter as *alter*, *cathedram possidens / primam* in *perist.* 2,462–3. In *perist.* 2,469–70, see below, Paul is also mentioned first (as in vv. 461–2), cf. Claudian's *c.m.* 50,1–2 (1.7.2) and Paulinus (1.11.6). Given Prudentius' preference for orthodox traditions, Mönnich's explanation seems preferable (confirmed by Paul. Nol. c. 21,7 and 29, see 1.11.6). Or Prudentius subtly visualises in his poem the place of martyrdom of both apostles: Paul, named first, died on the left bank, Peter on the right bank (see Lavarenne (1951) 229): the latter has the second (i.e. right) position in the verse.

618 'It is enough for you to have learned all this at Rome; when you return home, remember to keep this day of two festivals as you see it here.'

619 Peter's and Paul's martyrdom have a less prominent place in the poem than one would expect in a poem of the *Peristephanon*, see Roberts (2001) 558. He defines the *perist.* 12 as: "the most concentrated exercise in Prudentius' poetry in rewriting the city of Rome as Christian sacred space."

620 *Scit Tiberina palus, quae flumine lambitur propinquo, / binis dicatum caespitem tropaeis, / et crucis et gladii testis, quibus inrigans easdem / bis fluxit imber sanguinis per herbas.* *Tropaeum* in verse 8 is generally interpreted as 'victory', but can also indicate the body of a martyr. This is emphasised by Carcopino (1952) 425–6 (but see already Lavarenne (1951) 229), see also Mohrmann (1954) 159–64.

621 See e.g. Tränkle (1999), whose view was repudiated by Gnllka (2005). Further references and discussion of earlier literature (with different opinions) can be found in these publications. In a "Nachtrag" to the reprint of his article from 2005 Gnllka responds to Fux (2003): Gnllka (2007b) 352. Cf. also Iwaszkiewicz-Wronikowska (2010) 138–9.

in interpreting the passage as a description of a water basin meant to feed the Vatican baptistery, in opposition to Hermann Tränkle, who related vv. 31–44 to a *cantharus*, a vessel meant to provide water for the personal hygiene of pilgrims. Gnllka's most important arguments are the passage's notion of *chrisma* (v. 34), which has clear baptismal connotations, the problematic interpretation of *interior tumuli pars* in Tränkle's interpretation (since *tumulus* is not likely to mean 'ecclesiastical complex' nor is the *atrium* where the *cantharus* of the old San Pietro was found an *interior pars*, but the *uestibulum* instead) and the fact that a *cantharus* is not a *colymbus* (v. 36).

Verses 43–4 are particularly problematic, since the identification of *pastor* is difficult. The word has been differently interpreted as a reference to Damasus, a bishop in general and the apostle Peter. Since the works described before are executed on the orders of Damasus, *pastor* might refer to him, but the pope-poet was long dead when Prudentius wrote and published his poem. He was remembered through an epigram *in situ*, but this was not likely to be known to Prudentius' entire readership which seems to have been particularly outside the city (cf. vv. 65–6). Part of a solution may lie in the assumption that Prudentius intentionally left several interpretations open to the reader:⁶²² for readers knowing the Vatican, *pastor* would remind of Damasus, for others the shepherd baptising his sheep would remind of the pope in charge in their lifetime, and maybe even some readers would think of Peter indeed.⁶²³ However, if verses 43–4 are not taken as a reference to the practice of baptism proper, they might also be an addition to the description of the decoration of the basin, which had an *omnicolor pictura* according to verse 39. The whole passage (vv. 37–44) would then describe the *interior tumuli pars* of the water basin and Prudentius would intermingle reminiscences of the effects of colour, light and sound with a description of a mosaic, announced already in v. 39, which depicted the Good Shepherd watering his sheep.⁶²⁴ It does not seem necessary to consider vv. 43–4 an interpolation, although this cannot be

622 Such a practice has been claimed to be one of the main features of late antique poetry in general by Pelttari (2014).

623 Cf. Smith (1988) 275 who strongly supports this view: "Prudentius' text asserts the validity of apostolic succession in the papacy (...)." He also points to John 21.15–7 as an intertext for these verses.

624 For *pastor* referring to Peter, see Fux (2003) 426, Klein (2003) 106 and Fontaine (1964). The latter, p. 258, assumes that verse 33 refers to the scene of the water miracle, which he suggests to be seen by Prudentius in the baptistery (note 32). Although tempting (the water miracle was of course connected with baptism, cf. 2.2.2.1.1), this idea remains merely a hypothesis. Roberts (1993) 174 suggests that *pastor* should be related to the Roman bishop in general.

excluded.⁶²⁵ *illic* in v.43—which refers to a place of baptism (not referred to in the description of the preceding verses)—could have been used in a broader sense. The water basin fed the baptistery and was thus closely connected to it. In the carefully decorated basin described by Prudentius an image associated to baptism would not have been out of place.

Vv. 45–54 mention the embellishments added to the San Paolo fuori le mura by a *princeps bonus*.⁶²⁶ Prudentius concludes (vv. 55–6): *Ecce duas fidei summo Patre conferente dotes, / urbi colendas quas dedit togatae*. ‘There you have two dowers of the faith, the gift of the father supreme, which he has given to the city of the toga to be worshipped.’ Peter and Paul are explicitly linked with the Christian faith and presented as its outstanding examples (*duas dotes*).⁶²⁷ These verses also emphasise their bond with Rome once again, an element which pervades the whole poem.⁶²⁸ The poem closes with a description of the feast itself (vv. 57–64) and the appeal to celebrate it outside Rome (vv. 65–6).⁶²⁹

In the description of the martyrdom of both apostles, Nero is mentioned, probably to emphasise that Peter and Paul died only one year after each other.⁶³⁰ Moreover, he has a considerable role in the story about the death of Paul (*Martyrium Pauli*, part of the *Acta Pauli*). In the *martyrium* of Peter in the *Acta Petri* (30–41), Nero is mentioned in the last section (41). However, of all Christian poets only Commodianus (*Carmen apologeticum* 827–8) had

625 Gnilka (2005) 80–4, to be read with Gnilka (2007b) for criticism on Fux (2003). However, there is no external evidence for an interpolation. Gnilka dismisses the idea that *pastor* in v. 43 refers to Damasus, since the present tense would make the passage incomprehensible for Prudentius’ readership from 395 onwards, used to another authority at Peter’s see.

626 See Brandenburg (2002). Given Prudentius’ apparent aim to equally exalt both Peter and Paul, it remains enigmatic why he devoted a larger passage to his description of the church devoted to Peter in comparison to the church built for Paul. Gnilka (2005) 85 does not mention this in his otherwise elucidating outline of the structure of Per. 12,29–55, since he considers verses 43–4 spurious.

627 The association the word *dos* has with marriage might refer to the idea that the Christian community is the bride who will be given to the bridegroom Christ, cf. e.g. John 3.29. Mönnich (1990) 363 suggests that *dotes* refers to the buildings described.

628 Through a reference to the *Aeneid*, Peter and Paul are linked to Romulus and the fate Jupiter allotted to the Roman Empire, see Buchheit (1971) 471 (*urbi togatae* alludes to *gens togata* in *Aen.* 1,282).

629 The combination of metres of the poem also reflects its festive character, as Rodriguez-Herrera (1936) 95 acutely remarks with reference to Horace *Carmen* 1,4.

630 Carcopino (1952) 427 suggests that *easdem* (...) *herbas* (vv. 9–10) also refers to this idea: the herbs had come “au même degré de croissance”. It seems forced (though possible) to read the lines in this way.

named Nero with Peter and Paul so far. Apparently, Prudentius wished to make clear that he knew the oldest traditions about Peter's and Paul's death.⁶³¹ In the second book of the *Contra Symmachum* it is said (by the deified Roma) that Nero was prompted by Jupiter to murder the apostles (and not even them alone): *Illius instinctu primus Nero matre perempta / sanguinem apostolicum bibit (...)*.⁶³² The same is said in *perist.* 2,469–72, where Peter and Paul are invoked to chase Jupiter (vv. 469–70): *Te Paulus hinc exterminat / te sanguis exturbat Petri*.⁶³³ Peter and Paul are here explicitly mentioned as defenders of the Christian Rome alone. Through *sanguis*, the reason for their bond with Rome is emphasised.⁶³⁴

In his description of both banks of the Tiber, Prudentius seems to connect Peter with baptism in verses 31–44.⁶³⁵ Paul seems to be embedded in a regal context (cf. esp. v. 47). Ruysschaert suggested that Peter is presented as the spiritual counterpart of Paul, who is linked to the emperor and Rome's universal claim for power (which fits Paul's status as apostle of the gentiles).⁶³⁶ Although, this might play a role, it must be noted that Prudentius only describes structures that were recently built: the San Paolo was dedicated in 390 but finished under Siricius, the basin and irrigation canals under Damasus. If Prudentius' principal aim was to praise recent embellishments of the site—an aim probably prompted by his desire to appeal to a Spanish audience or by a touch of regional proud, since Theodosius and Damasus were both of Spanish origin—,

631 See Palmer (1989) 254–5 about Prudentius' sources for *perist.* 12.

632 *C. Symm.* 2,669–70: 'It was at this prompting (i.e. from Jupiter, *rd*) that Nero, after slaying his mother, was the first to drink the blood of the apostles (...).'

633 'Paul banishes you hence, the blood of Peter drives you out.' Nero is mentioned in v. 472.

634 Cf. Pietri (1961) 319 and of course Damasus epigram 20.

635 With (among others) Gnlika (2005) 66, Fux (2003) 423, Ruysschaert (1966) and Fontaine (1964) 249–50, I read *frondem* for *fontem* in v. 34, in contrast with Bergman (1926), Lavarenne (1951) and Cunningham (1966).

636 Ruysschaert (1966) 285–6 suggests that the emphasis on water in the description of Peter's bank has been influenced by Damasus, who connects the episcopal see of Peter explicitly to baptism (*ep.* 4: *Una Petri sedes, unum uerumque lauacrum*, see 1.5.3). The fact that Prudentius considers Peter more important than Paul, should explain the more elaborate description of Peter's bank. Ruysschaert explains Peter's primacy by the fact that Peter was still important for the Church since he was the first bishop, whereas Paul was only important in his own time (according to Ruysschaert, this opinion can be derived from *perist.* 11,31–2, where Paul and the *cathedra Petri* are put on a par). However, it seems plausible that Prudentius intended to connect Paul with the emperor and the Roman Empire, as explained above, which would render him by no means less relevant to Prudentius' time than Peter. Moreover, Paul's position in the *c. Symm.* (with the first preface devoted to him and the second to Peter) does not seem to support Ruysschaert's opinion.

he actually praised embellishments that represented a Spanish appropriation of the place: this might indicate that he wrote *perist.* 12 for a Spanish audience.⁶³⁷

At several other places in his work, Prudentius mentions Peter and Paul together. In a striking passage in the *c. Symm.*, he refers to the fact that even senators are venerating the apostles (1,548–51):

Iamque ruit paucis Tarpeia in rupe relictis
ad sincera uirum penetralia Nazareorum
atque ad apostolicos Euandria curia fontes,
Anniadum suboles et pignera clara Proborum.⁶³⁸

And now, leaving but a few on the Tarpeian rock, to the pure sanctuaries of the men of Nazareth and the apostolic sources hastens Evander's senate, the descendants of the family of Annius and the illustrious children of the Probi.

The *apostolicos fontes* refer to baptism (cf. *perist.* 12 and its description of the basin of Saint Peter's, vv. 31–44) but also to the basilicas of Peter and Paul. It has been noticed that these *fontes* not only attract most of the aristocrats, but even embrace them on a syntactical level (*apostolicos Euandria curia fontes*).⁶³⁹ Traditional Roman names (*Tarpeia*, *Euandria*, *Anniadum*, *Proborum*) are contrasted with the name for people from Jesus' residence: *Nazareorum*, to be interpreted in a general sense as Christians.⁶⁴⁰ The apostles are connected to Christ and Rome alike. Maybe Prudentius uses the indication *Nazareorum uirum* also in order to refer to John 1.47, where Nathanael famously asked: "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" In contrast with the reputation of the town in Biblical times, even the people highest in rank now hurry to Nazareth. A similar statement about senators hastening towards the apostles (and martyrs, in this case), can be found in *perist.* 2,517–20. In this poem in Ambrosian strophes devoted to the Roman martyr Lawrence, Peter and Paul are also highlighted.⁶⁴¹

637 Smolak (2001) 362–4 and Ruyschaert (1966) argue for a Spanish audience.

638 This line has been suspected to be an interpolation by Prudentius or—more likely—by a later reader, see Barnes & Westall (1991) 55–8. The verse refers to the two consuls of 395.

639 Roberts (2001) 555–6. He interprets *fontes* also as "sources of apostolic teaching".

640 Cf. Blaise s.v., who refers to *c. Symm.* 1,519, where the word *Nazaraeus* does not occur; *c. Symm.* 1,549 is meant. The passage (especially the names) should not be interpreted as reflecting reality, but as praise to the most important Roman families of Prudentius' time, as is convincingly argued by Cameron (2011) 179–82 (pp. 179–80 about this passage).

641 See Buchheit (1971) 471–2, also referring to Ambrose's hymn to Lawrence (Hymn 13,1: *Apostolorum supparem*).

Before the passage cited above, Prudentius admits that—much to his regret—there are also many senators who are still honouring the pagan gods. After Prudentius has asked God to send Gabriel in order to impose the faith in God on the Romans, the two most important apostles are praised (*perist.* 2,457–64) through Lawrence:

Et iam tenemus obsides
 fidissimos huius spei,
 hic nempe iam regnant duo
 460 apostolorum principes;

 alter uocator gentium;
 alter, cathedram possidens
 primam, recludit creditas
 aeternitatis ianuas.

Already we hold most trusty sureties for this hope, for already there reign here the two chiefs of the apostles, the one calls the Gentiles, while the other occupies the foremost chair and opens the gates of eternity which were committed to him.

Peter and Paul are first praised together as *obsides fidissimos* of the hope that the senate will leave paganism and more commonly as the leaders of the apostles (*apostolorum principes*).⁶⁴² In the next strophe, their special position is explained: Paul is the apostle who spread the Word among the gentiles (cf. 1 Tim 2.7); Peter's status is described in a more detailed way. This could be due to the context, in which Prudentius addresses the Roman senate. Peter is represented by the Roman Church, the most important (*primam*) Church of Christianity, of which the primary status is already heralded by the word *regnant* (v. 459) and *principes* (v. 460).⁶⁴³ Like the Church, Peter not only reigns on earth (vv. 462–3), but also in heaven (vv. 463–4). He is represented as gate-keeper of heaven (consistent with Matt 16.19), like in Juvenius (*evang.* 3,283–4), Damasus (*ep.* 4,2) and Gregory of Nazianzus (1,2,1 488).⁶⁴⁴ It appears that

642 Deproost (1990) 115 (note 317) mentions the earliest occurrences of *princeps apostolorum*: Hil. *In Matth.* 7,6 and Hier. *uir. ill.* 1 (*princeps apostolorum* used to designate Peter).

643 In v. 473 Prudentius uses the word *princeps* again, but this time to denote the emperor Theodosius. Thus, worldly and heavenly power are both mentioned. In *perist.* 11,31–2 the episcopal see is referred to: *Una fides uigeat, prisco quae condita templo est, / quam Paulus retinet quamque cathedra Petri* (cf. 1.10.4).

644 However, Fux (2003) 214 suggests a contrast with Lawrence, to whom the hymn is devoted.

this conspicuous function of Peter was receiving more attention in Prudentius' time, since it also appears in Christian art.⁶⁴⁵ Juvencus versified basically all stories of the gospels; in this case in an impartial way. The fact that Damasus, Gregory and Prudentius mention it is therefore much more significant. In *perist.* 2 it contributes to the glory of Peter and the power of the main defenders of the Roman Christians.

The *Contra Symmachum* has already been mentioned in the sections 1.10.4–5 above. Its prefaces are clearly connected through lexical similarities and the choice for the two *principes apostolorum* as their main characters. They are also linked with the prefaces of the *hamart.* and *psych.*, which have two figures from the Old Testament as their main characters (i.e. Cain and Abel).⁶⁴⁶ Probably, Prudentius implicitly wanted to present the two apostles as the Christian alternative for Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome.⁶⁴⁷

A comparison with the Dioscuri probably also played a role. Acts 10.11, which follows immediately after the passages describing Paul's stay at Malta, mentions that the new ship which brought Paul to Rome had the Dioscuri as a figurehead (they were considered protectors of sailors). As mentioned above (1.5.1, but cf. also 2.2.2.1.3), Peter and Paul were sometimes seen as the new, Christian Dioscuri. Prudentius might have been stimulated by this idea when he chose Acts 28.1–6 as the main subject of his first preface, which is clearly connected with the second preface in which Peter is the main figure.

Moreover, there are some more similarities on the structural and lexical level between the two poems.⁶⁴⁸ In both prefaces, the apostles, Paul and Peter respectively, are compared to Prudentius and the Church. The status of Peter and Paul as the main human defenders of the Church is used in Prudentius' poems to present Prudentius as a defender worthy of the Christian faith. Emanuele Rapisarda seems to be right when he suggests that the Biblical stories in the prefaces of the *c. Symm.* were merely selected because of literary reasons. Prudentius considered sea metaphors useful for the message of his prefaces and the exegetical tradition of the passages apparently played no role for him.⁶⁴⁹

645 See TIP s.v. *Traditio legis et clavium*, esp. pp. 292–3 (Spera).

646 Fontaine (1981) 199.

647 See Roberts (2001) 560–1, cf. Klein (2001) 336–8, about Peter and Paul and Romulus and Remus in *perist.* 2 (cf. Fux (2003) 213–4): Zwierlein (2010²) 178; Fux (2003) 219; Klein (2003) 94; Buchheit (1971) 477–8. Cf. *perist.* 12.57 (*plebs romula*, see Behrwald (2009) 275), *c. Symm. praef.* 1.80 (*saluator generis romulea*) and 1.10.4 on *perist.* 7.61–5. Mönnich (1990) 194 concluded: “Deze twee (Peter and Paul, *rd*) staan als beschermers opgesteld vóór het Rome dat Prudentius oproept.”

648 Cf. *c. Symm. praef.* 1.1–2 and 2.1–2; 1.23 and 2.33.

649 Rapisarda (1964). Cf. Thraede (1965) 66–7.

The similarities between the two prefaces contributed to the image of *concordia* between the two apostles.

1.10.7 *John*

The apostle John is the apostle who, after Peter and Paul, is mentioned most often by Prudentius. Most of the time, the poet mentions him without providing details. In *cath.* 6 (*Hymnus ante somnum*, written in iambic dimeters), Prudentius dilates upon true and false dreams (vv. 25–56), Joseph's oneiromancy (vv. 57–72) and revelations which come to the righteous (*iustis*, v. 73) in dreams and are provided by Christ. He then examines some revelations of John (vv. 77–116).⁶⁵⁰ John is called *euangelista summi* / *fidissimus Magistri* (vv. 77–8) and a *iustus* / (...) *heros* (vv. 113–4), since he is able to cope with frightening visions (which normal people, *nos*, cannot bear, vv. 117–20). In v. 108 his own name, *Iohannis*, is mentioned. The reverence for John as the most sagacious evangelist was already present in Ambrose's hymn 6 devoted to him.⁶⁵¹ In this hymn (vv. 3–4) as well as in Prudentius' poem (vv. 79–80), John is praised as someone who revealed hidden matters.

1.10.8 *Judas*

All references to Judas are related to his betrayal of Christ. *Ditt.* 39,153–6 describes the Field of Blood (Matt 27.8 and Acts 1.18):

Campus Acheldemach sceleris mercede nefandi
uenditus exsequias recipit tumulosus humanas;
sanguinis hoc pretium est Christi. Iuda eminus artat
infelix collum laqueo pro crimine tanto.

The field Aceldama, which was sold for the price of a sin unspeakable, receives bodies for burial and is covered with graves. This is the price of the blood of Christ. At a distance, the wretched Judas draws a noose tight about his neck for his great crime.

⁶⁵⁰ In *hamart.* 911 John's soul is mentioned. The context is similar: the soul is corporeal (*corporeus*), but sees everything in dreams. *Ditt.* 48 (*Apocalypsis Iohannis*) is also about the visions of John, see 1.10.7. For references to Johannine texts in the New Testament (Prudentius refers more than 20 times to the Johannine prologue), see Charlet (1983) 80–2.

⁶⁵¹ See 1.6.4. Cf. also Prud. *apoth.* 9 (*Iohannis magni*) and Amph. *Iambi ad Seleucum* 292–3 (ἀρίθμει τὸν Ἰωάννην χροῶν / τέταρτον, ἀλλὰ πρῶτον ὕψει δογμάτων), discussed in 1.10.7 and 1.8.1.

In the background (*eminus*, v. 155) of a picture for which this description might have been written, the hanging of Judas could have been portrayed.⁶⁵² The last three words of the first and last verse (*sceleris mercede nefandi*, v. 153 and *pro crimine tanto*, v. 156) both emphasise the abomination of Judas' deed. The wording *sanguinis pretium* is already found in the Vulgate (Matt 27.6). Moreover, Judas is contrasted to Christ by word order (v. 155). Judas is called *infelix*, as in Juvenecus' *evang.* 4,628 (see 1.2.3.2), in the same context.

The price paid for Judas' betrayal is also important in the only other passage in which Prudentius pays attention to Judas. In the *Psychomachia*, the apostle is praised in a speech of the vice *Auaritia*, who notes with amazement that her spear does not strike some priests, due to the intervention of *Ratio*.⁶⁵³ *Auaritia* complains that the Christians are not liable to bribery. She then sums up some of her successes in the past, the first of which is Judas:

(...) Nonne triumphum
 530 egimus ex Scarioth, magnus qui discipulorum
 et conuiua Dei, dum fallit foedere mensae
 haudquaquam ignarum, dextramque parabside iungit.
 Incidit in nostrum flammante cupidine telum,
 infamem mercatus agrum de sanguine amici
 535 numinis, obliiso luiturus iugera collo.

Did we not triumph over Iscariot, a great one among the disciples and a comensal of God, while he betrayed Him (though He knows all) as he sat at his table and he put his hand into the dish? He fell upon our weapon in the heat of his desire, for he bought a piece of land of ill fame with the price of the blood of his divine friend, and was doomed to atone for his acres with a strangled neck.

For *Auaritia*, Judas is *magnus discipulorum* (v. 530). She emphasises that Judas once was a *conuiua Dei* (v. 531) and a friend of God (*amici* / *numinis*, vv. 534–5). This extraordinary representation of Judas is of course due to the original and remarkable work which is the *Psychomachia*, in which vices and virtues both speak. It also is a statement of confidence: Prudentius did not fear to allow an adversary of Christianity to give her view, whereas Gregory of Nazianzus around

652 Pillinger (1980) 97 interprets *eminus* as “Umstandswort der Zeit”, Thomson (1961) translates “hanging off the ground.” Gnllka (2009a) 148 rejects Pillinger's interpretation and agrees with Arevalo, who interprets the word as ‘lofty’ or the like. However, even if Gnllka rightly states that *pretium* is the central notion of the *titulus* (id. pp. 147–8), this does not—in my opinion—influence the meaning of *eminus*.

653 See for *Auaritia* in this passage e.g. Newhauser (2000) 79–85.

the same time eagerly tries to explain how Judas could have been among the apostles without contaminating them (I,2,1 680–3, see 1.9.2). The name Iscariot is but rarely used to denote Judas in early Christian poetry; maybe Prudentius chose this less well-known name to emphasise the extraordinary setting of the passage or Judas' Jewish background. The only other example can be found in Gregory's oeuvre: II,1,13 177. In the Prudentian passage, a second example of the power of *Auaritia* is derived from the Old Testament, about Achan who stole booty dedicated to God (Jos 7.1; 18–26).⁶⁵⁴

1.10.9 *The Other Apostles*

Matthew and Philip are mentioned only once. Matthew is referred to as the evangelist who described Jesus' genealogy in a quarrel with the Manicheans in *apoth.* 981. Philip is named only because Prudentius quotes John 14.9, in which Jesus speaks to him. The focus is entirely on Christ.

1.10.10 *Concluding Remarks*

Peter and Paul are the apostles who occupy the most important place in Prudentius' large and varied oeuvre. Prudentius clearly favoured the martyr cult. He devoted a hymn to the two apostles in his *Peristephanon* in which recent building activities in behalf of the cult for Peter and Paul held an important place.

Prudentius devotes two large pieces of poetry to Paul and Peter as individual apostles: the *praefationes* of his *Contra Symmachum*, in which he compares himself to the apostles (in a humble way). These highly literary pieces testify to the popularity of the apostles. It is the first time that apostles are explicitly linked to (more or less) contemporary politics, other than the position of the Church of Rome. The second preface, devoted to Peter, highlights the apostle more than the Biblical model obliged Prudentius to do: his versification is comparable to Juvenecus' technique in this respect. Prudentius also pays attention to the story of the denial, in which he discusses the role of Peter in a positive way, in accordance with contemporary exegesis.

The first preface of *c. Symm.* is devoted to Paul, rephrasing in verses Acts 27.14–28.6 and providing it with an exegesis pointing to contemporary events.

654 The comparison of Judas' and Achan's case has not often been made in Latin poetry. Apart from some mediaeval authors, only one poet contemporary to Prudentius mentions Achan: Cyprianus Gallus, in his epic of the Old Testament. The motive he provides for Achan's deed (*praedae et spoliolum accensus amore*, v. 209) resembles *Psychomachia* 533, but there is no evidence for any connection with this passage (although Cyprianus' work elsewhere shows Prudentian influences, see LACL s.v. "Cyprian, Dichter").

References to pagan literature link the representation of the apostles to Rome's glorious origins, but assuming that Paul was put on a par with Aeneas in the preface might be too farfetched. The comparison of Peter and Paul with Romulus and Remus, which is often mentioned in modern literature, is equally based on indirect references and its importance should not be exaggerated. More elaborate (and therefore more significant) is Prudentius' description of the two banks of the Tiber: the poet emphasises the connection of Paul with imperial, universal (worldly) power, whereas Peter is represented more as a spiritual leader, supervising baptism. The *concordia* between Peter and Paul is emphasised by Prudentius: it is striking that he does not devote separate hymns to them in his *Peristephanon*, but wrote one hymn in which he pays attention to both of them, whereas nine of the fourteen hymns in the *Peristephanon* are devoted to individual saints.⁶⁵⁵

References to the other apostles are rare, but Matthew and Philip are mentioned once. Prudentius' remark to revelations is exceptional: John is called a *iustus heros* (*cath.* 6,113–4) for bearing the impact of impressive revelations. Judas' betrayal is also portrayed in a special way: in *Psychomachia* 529–35, Prudentius dares to praise Judas in the words of the anti-Christian vice *Auaritia*, which may be taken as a sign of his confidence in the definitive victory of Christian faith over paganism.

The twelve apostles as a group are often indicated by their number, e.g. in the allegorically explained stories of Josh 4.1–9 and Exod 15.27. The latter stories are mentioned in Prudentius' *tituli* and are some of the few testimonies for the existence of typological images referring to the apostles in early Christian art.

1.11 Paulinus of Nola

The aristocratic poet Meropius Pontius Paulinus made a remarkable contribution to hagiographical Christian poetry.⁶⁵⁶ A great part of his oeuvre is devoted to saint Felix, for whom Paulinus showed a personal affection not equalled in Christian poetry about saints before the fifth century. Felix inspired him to undertake considerable building activities, such as the construction of

655 Cf. Ambrose, who addresses his hymns most often to God or Christ. However, the collection of his hymns also includes a hymn for John (no. 6) and Lawrence (no. 13). Hymn 10 is devoted to Victor, Nabor and Felix.

656 Nevertheless, Paulinus' work has been criticised in modern times, cf. Herzog (1977) 380: "Er gilt als langweiligen, z.T. läppischen Poet." Since then, much research has been conducted, testifying for a growing appreciation of the interest of Paulinus' poetry.

churches and a monastery in honour of Felix. Paulinus was relatively famous among contemporary Christians for his choice of an ascetic lifestyle.⁶⁵⁷ His poetry was interspersed with personal details, which was unique in Latin Christian poetry until then.⁶⁵⁸

Nowadays, we have 30 *carmina* written by Paulinus, including 14 so-called *natalicia* composed at the occasion of Felix's feast day. 52 Letters also remain, numbers 8 and 32 of which comprise a considerable number of verses.⁶⁵⁹ Other sources about Paulinus are scarce, apart from a letter to Pacatus from the pen of a certain Uranius (*De obitu Paulini*). The period 393–408 is best documented; of Paulinus' own works only *c.* 1–3 and *ep.* 35–6 (earlier) and *ep.* 51–2 (later) date from another period.

Paulinus grew up in Bordeaux and was educated by Ausonius, with whom he later maintained a correspondence (389–393) of which some letters remain. In 378 at the latest, Paulinus became a Roman senator, which reveals his good relationship with the Roman upper class. Between 381 and 383, he spent some time in Milan, where he met Ambrose. He corresponded with him until the death of the Milanese bishop in 397.⁶⁶⁰ In this period he also married his wife Theresia. Later in his life, she might have stimulated Paulinus' more ascetic lifestyle.

After he had moved to Spain in 389, Paulinus lived the life of a Roman aristocrat enjoying his *otium*, albeit in a Christian and ascetic way.⁶⁶¹ Paulinus did not live a life in isolation, nor did he give up his earthly possessions. Due to

657 See the testimonies collected in Mratschek (2002) 608–15.

658 In Greek, Gregory of Nazianzus also writes autobiographical poetry. In this section I will in general follow the biography of Paulinus by Trout (1999), unless stated otherwise. On pp. 5–22 Trout discusses Paulinus' well-considered acts of self-representation. Recently, Paulinus' status as a rich aristocrat and his relationship to the poor were also discussed in Brown (2012) 224–40.

659 See Trout (1999) 271–2. Trout attributes *c.* 4 to Paulinus of Pella, *c.* 5 to Ausonius and *c.* 30 to an unknown poet. Paulinus' authorship of *c.* 32 and 33 is disputed. Trout's counting includes CIL 10,1370 and a recently found poem, for which see Lehmann (1998). Cf. the outline of Paulinus' poetry by Ruggiero (1996a) 16–21. According to J. Desmulliez ("Paulin de Nole: Etudes chronologiques (393–397)", *REA* 20, 1985, pp. 35–64), one *natalicium* from the period 399–402 is now missing, which would affect the date of the *natalicia* written thereafter. Paulinus has written other works that are now (almost entirely) lost, including a versification of Suetonius' *De regibus*, of which a fragment remains, hymns and a general book praising all martyrs (for which see Gennadius *De uiris illustribus* 49).

660 For *testimonia* of the friendship between the two, see specially Costanza (1974). Ambrose sent relics (of the martyr Nazarius) to Paulinus, see *c.* 27, 436–7.

661 See Trout (1999) 53–77, Fontaine (1981) 143–60 and *id.* (1972).

Paulinus' unorthodox career (he was almost forced by the people to become a presbyter in Barcelona in 394, instead of being appointed by the Church), mixed feelings about the phenomenon of monasticism in general and his alleged heretic sympathies, the monk-poet was sometimes looked at with distrust by the other clergy, in spite of all his donations (money and maybe also land) to the Church.

In the years before 390, Paulinus had built a road from Nola to Felix's tomb and constructed a shelter there. In 395, Paulinus moved to Nola and devoted his life to saint Felix. According to Paulinus himself, he had already visited the shrine of Felix in Nola in his childhood (c. 21,367–73). This shrine had been embellished under Constantine. Nevertheless, almost nothing is known about the saint which cannot be found in Paulinus' writings.⁶⁶² The poet erected a monastic complex of which archaeological records can still be seen today. Next to an existing basilica, the so-called *Basilica vetus*, Paulinus built a new own one, also devoted to Felix, which he called *Basilica nova*. This basilica was oriented towards the west, i.e. towards the tomb of Felix, which was exhibited in the *Basilica vetus*. From the altar of the new church, one could see, through the nave of the church and a small portico connecting the two churches, the sepulchre of Felix (fig. 2). The clerestory of the old church offered a view from above on the altar and Felix's grave. The relics in the altar are mentioned by Paulinus, but it is not entirely clear which relics were kept in each altar. The apostolic relics were probably kept in both, although only the *Basilica nova* is sometimes called *Basilica apostolorum*.⁶⁶³ Apart from these two buildings, Paulinus further embellished the site and made it more accessible. The site attracted many pilgrims for whom Paulinus had a guesthouse built. He also built a church in Fundi (see *ep.* 32,17) and initiated building activities in Alingo, of which nothing remains.⁶⁶⁴

Paulinus wrote extensively about the architecture and decoration of the churches, especially the *Basilica nova* in Nola. The actual development of Paulinus' building activities is often difficult to measure, however, since he does not provide much concrete information in his poems and letters.

662 Epigram 61 of Damasus, devoted to Felix and most probably executed in monumental form in Nola near the shrine of Felix, testifies to Felix's fame and popularity outside Nola even before Paulinus had founded a monastic community there. It is the only epigram Damasus wrote for a non-Roman saint, see Lehmann (1992), esp. 264–71.

663 The nature of the apostolic relics (e.g. were they 'real' or contact relics) is far from clear, see McCulloh (1976) 182–3.

664 For Paulinus' building activities see in particular Lehmann (2004) and Lehmann (2003), also Goldschmidt (1940). Trout (1999) 150 refers to Alingo.

Paulinus' poetic and architectonic projects were intimately intertwined: he often emphasised the symbolic meaning of his constructions and compared his building activities to the 'construction' of the Christian soul.⁶⁶⁵

Almost nothing of the original decoration of the Nolan complex has been preserved.⁶⁶⁶ However, Paulinus describes two cycles of images depicting scenes from the Old Testament, of which one was painted in the central nave of the Basilica nova, above the arcades, and the other in the atrium or *vestibulum* between the old and the new basilica. These cycles are considered the oldest Biblical cycles known to us which have certainly existed (c. 27,511–635).⁶⁶⁷ Moreover, the scenes chosen to be represented show some Biblical passages which are otherwise unknown or the first of this kind in early Christian art.⁶⁶⁸ Compared with the Old Testament cycle in the Santa Maria Maggiore, which is still visible and was created only forty years later, just two pictures represent the same theme, which seems to testify to the originality of Paulinus' imagery.⁶⁶⁹ In the Basilica vetus, a cycle of New Testament images was depicted: a project without precedent.⁶⁷⁰ Unfortunately Paulinus does not elaborate on it, although the cycle was created under his supervision, during the works on the Basilica nova. Paulinus' imagery might have been influenced by the art he saw in Aquitania and Rome, but without further knowledge, this hypothesis cannot be affirmed.⁶⁷¹

665 This is the central thesis of the book of Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006), see also id. (2009).

666 See Korol (1987) and Weis (1957), esp. pp. 143–9.

667 However, two remarkably early pictures from the second half of the third century, representing Adam and Eve and Jonah, have been preserved at the site, see Ebanista and Fusaro (2010) 35–41 and Korol (2004) 147–9, also for other traces of images. Because of the third-century pictures (found in graves 13 and 14) Lehmann (2003) 106 assumed that a cycle of 41 pictures about the Old Testament once existed, which might have been less coherent than the one described by Paulinus.

668 Viz. the depiction of the story of Abimelek filling up the wells of Isaac (Gen 26.15) and the separation of Ruth and Orpah (Ruth 1.14), see Lehmann (2004) 210–2.

669 Lehmann (2004) 210–4.

670 Lehmann (2003) 107. However, if Ambrose's and Prudentius' *tituli* are considered as real captions, they testify to earlier New Testament cycles, cf. *Introduction* 4.2.2.1. For Paulinus' presentation of the symbolical significance of pictures from Old Testament stories in a new basilica and vice versa, see e.g. Guttilla (1995) 66–72 and Junod-Ammerbauer (1978) 39–42. For both the Old Testament and the New Testament cycles, see Weis (1957), esp. 137–44.

671 Cf. Mönnich (1990) 399, who states that the sea stories in Paulinus' poems seem to be based on floor mosaics rather than own experience, without further argument.

Paulinus apparently felt obliged to defend the use of these pictures in his churches in a long passage (c. 27,542–95), explaining the use of the images. He acknowledges that embellishing a church with pictures is rare (v. 544: *raro more*). But through the bewilderment caused by the paintings, the minds and thoughts of the people would be directed towards Felix. The pictures were necessary, according to Paulinus, to educate the uneducated: many of the pilgrims visiting his site were illiterate and were accustomed to pictures in a religious context by pagan cults. Moreover, the images detracted the attention of the people, which kept them from excessive drinking. Paulinus himself points to the pictures for inspiration for his prayer at the end of *carmen* 27 (vv. 596–8 and 607). The pictures were elucidated by captions (*tituli*), for the use of which Paulinus is an important witness: he mentions them in his letters (cf. *Introduction* 4.2.2.1).

Paulinus' exact position in Nola is unclear, although he was undoubtedly accepted as a leading figure due to his wealth (which enabled him to employ his building activities in the first place) and social status. His network was impressive and included clerics as well as many lay aristocrats, some of whom were sympathetic towards traditional religions.⁶⁷² From 394 to 400, Paulinus corresponded with Jerome, who seems to have been one of the persons who stimulated his monasticism (along with e.g. Damasus, Ambrose and Martin of Tours).⁶⁷³ In Augustine, however, Paulinus found a correspondent more favourably disposed towards him (and his poetry).⁶⁷⁴ Once Paulinus had moved to Nola, the monastic complex he built there made it even easier for him to receive and accommodate his guests. Moreover, from 395 onwards, Paulinus visited the feast day of Peter and Paul in Rome (29 June) every year, which enabled him to maintain his relations with the Roman elite.⁶⁷⁵ This is also clear from his panegyric on Theodosius, written in 395 (now lost). In this period, Paulinus wrote some Biblical poetry too (e.g. c. 6, a Biblical epyllion of the life of John the Baptist).

672 Trout (1999) 199 points out that Paulinus' contacts ran from Northern Gaul to North Africa and Palestine. Cf. Mratschek (2002), with insightful maps; see also Mratschek (2001), who specifically points at the location of Nola as a "stopover to the court" at pp. 531–9.

673 Maybe Damasus' epigrams elucidating the graves of martyrs inspired Paulinus to write *tituli* in his complex devoted to the martyr Felix. Some verbal reminiscences of Damasus' epigrams have been detected in Paulinus' work, see De Hartel (1999a) 489.

674 See Muys (1941) on Paulinus' correspondence with Augustine.

675 See esp. Näf (1997) and Mratschek (2001), pp. 269–75 in particular.

In 395, Paulinus also published his first known *natalicium*.⁶⁷⁶ He continued to write these at least up to 407. It seems improbable that Paulinus stopped writing poems and other texts by then, although only two letters remain which are dated after this year.⁶⁷⁷ Consequently, little is known about Paulinus' life after 407. He was captured by the Goths, probably in the period 408–410, and became bishop in 412.⁶⁷⁸ Paulinus died at 22 June 431.

Paulinus' poetry was, at least according to himself, composed through divine inspiration.⁶⁷⁹ He compared himself to David, who had also sung what prophets had already foretold in poetry (c. 6,14–26). In general, in his poetry he strived to reach the classic ideal of *utile et dulce*: the *natalicia* were a mix of entertainment and education.⁶⁸⁰ He also had a personal interest in writing poetry. It was one of the ways in which he presented himself as an intermediary between the people and Felix, who was in his turn an intermediary between the people and Christ.⁶⁸¹ Paulinus used the *natalicia* not only to construct the life of Felix, but also that of himself: "Through such constructions, biography slides almost imperceptibly into autobiography. But this subtle elision of subject and narrator is underscored by striking parallels, some quite obvious, between the *vita Felicis* and the emerging *vita Paulini*."⁶⁸² Paulinus and Felix inevitably almost became one and the same person for the people listening to the priest. He thus affirmed his status as an essential cleric, not only for the people, but also for the other clergy.

676 Paulinus probably published the *natalicia*, or at least the longer ones (i.e. not the first three *natalicia*), separately and did not necessarily envisage a complete edition of the *natalicia*, for which the manuscript tradition provides some evidence, see Mratschek (1996) 165–70.

677 See Lehmann (1998) 194.

678 Goths: Aug. *ciu.* 1,10. Cf. Lehmann (1998) 186–95. Bishop: Trout (1999) 2.

679 See Junod-Ammerbauer (1975) 15–26 and the insightful chapter about Paulinus in Witke (1971) 75–101 for the practice and consequences of Paulinus' replacement of the muses and Apollo by Christ. Paulinus dismisses the fables of the classical poets: he claims to tell the truth instead, see e.g. c. 20,28–30.

680 Junod-Ammerbauer (1975) 14, see in Paulinus e.g. *ep.* 8,3 and c. 6,18–9: *Nos tantum modulis euoluere dicta canoris / uouimus et uersu mentes laxare legentum*. Kirsch (1985) 107 interprets the latter verses as a hint to the mnemotechnic aspect of poetry. In c. 15,30–4 Paulinus rejects inspiration by Apollo and the Muses. Paulinus' texts are cited after the edition of De Hartel (1999a).

681 Cf. Trout (1999) 194 mentioning "(...) Paulinus' insistence that he was the special friend of a special friend of Christ."

682 Id. 168, who also remarks that after his death, Paulinus became as important in Nola as Felix himself (p. 267). Cf. Burnier (2009), esp. 73–81, about the function of the first person in Paulinus' poetry.

Paulinus, like many other Christian poets, was a classicising poet, showing profound knowledge of traditional classical metres, language and genres.⁶⁸³ At the same time, especially in his letters, Biblical citations are abundant. Most often, Paulinus links a whole series of Biblical citations expressing his own ideas.⁶⁸⁴ Another source of inspiration were Christian poets such as Juvenecus and Prudentius.⁶⁸⁵

Although the veneration of saints became a common aspect of Christian life during the fourth century, the beneficial effects of relics were not undisputed: Augustine's *De cura pro mortuis gerenda* contains some criticism. On the other hand, even Augustine at least once "used" Felix in order to settle a controversy.⁶⁸⁶ In other theological questions, Paulinus seems to have tried not to take sides: "he was converted to a way of life, not to a way of thinking."⁶⁸⁷ He maintained contacts with orthodox theologians and heretics (e.g. Pelagius) alike. Although Paulinus certainly knew Ambrose's commentary on Luke and Ambrosiaster's commentary on the Pauline epistles, theological treatises do not seem to have left many specific traces in his work. This is not to say that Paulinus' poetry was not highly impregnated with didactic devices: "La dottrina (...) costituisce l'elemento che più d'ogni altro esprime con intenso fervore la motivazione più vera e il risultato più valido della poesia di Paolino." Doctrine in some digressions turned out to be more important than the narrative of the poem. However, Paulinus always adapted catechetical passages to a particular context.⁶⁸⁸

683 The influence of classical literature and culture on Paulinus has been much discussed. See especially Junod-Ammerbauer (1975). On p. 53 she concludes: "tout en restant imprégné de culture païenne, il la regrette, et tout en la regretant, il s'y réfère." Kirsch (1985) 110–1 emphasises that Paulinus always remained aware of the uneducated people among his audience. See Green (1971) 41–60 about Paulinus and other writers and texts (including the Bible), p. 130 for a judgement on Paulinus' classicising qualities. See also Wachel (1978), about classical literature and the Bible. Paulinus' prose writings were of a high stylistic level too, see Muys (1941) 15–9.

684 See the section "Paulinus and the Bible", Lienhard (1977) 128–33.

685 For the latter, see Evenepoel (1979) 72–5, Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 479–85 and Trout (1999) 92. Green (1971) 51–4 also mentions the contemporary poets Ausonius, Claudian and Damasus.

686 See Trout (1999) 235–6 for the controversy (also Mratschek (2001) 525–7), id. 245–7 for *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*. Cf. Brown (1981) 23–49 for the *depositio ad sanctos* (pp. 27 and 35 about Augustine and Paulinus).

687 Lienhard (1977) 141.

688 See Costanza (1988), quotation from p. 284. For Paulinus and theology cf. Ruggiero (1996a) 54–72.

Paulinus generally wrote for a mixed audience, since he recited his *natalicia* to a miscellaneous crowd.⁶⁸⁹ Some *natalicia*, however, were written for occasions at which people from the elite were present, which means that they might have been recited in smaller company or at least adapted to the visitors' (supposed) erudition.⁶⁹⁰ Paulinus also sent his poems to aristocrats for comments.⁶⁹¹ His letters were most often directed at Christians who were more involved in Christian affairs than he was. As a result, the catechetical elements which were characteristic of his poetry are mostly absent in his letters.⁶⁹²

Where the *natalicia* were recited is not clear. It might have been the *tugurium* next to the visitor's rooms on the first floor (with a view on Felix's shrine), as suggested by Kohlwes, but no archaeological traces remain.⁶⁹³ Another possibility is that the *natalicia* were recited in the open air on the forum.⁶⁹⁴ This forum might have been situated next to the Basilica vetus.⁶⁹⁵ It has also been suggested that *natalicia* were recited next to the tomb of Felix, but this suggestion was made for *carmen* 27 specifically, a *carmen* probably addressed to a particular audience.⁶⁹⁶

It is therefore also unclear how many people could attend the readings. Almost nothing is known about the life in Nola's monastic community and the performance situation of the poems is also unclear: it is unknown if the recital of a *natalicium* was a separate event on Felix's feast day or part of the

689 Paulinus' first poems (c. 1–2) were for private use, but from *carmen* 3 onwards his poetry is meant to be spread as homilies in verses, according to Kirsch (1983). Kirsch also distinguishes between the *natalicia* up to 402, which were meant to affirm faith in the saint, and those from 404 onwards, in which Felix also appears as a punishing saint.

690 Bishop Nicetas visited Nola on Felix's feast day when c. 27 (see esp. vv. 360–595) and 28 (see esp. vv. 1–59 and 167–325) were recited. C. 21 was recited at the visit of Melania the elder. See Kirsch (1989) 209. Kohlwes (1979) 213–5 supposes that at least c. 21 and 27 were recited only for a small audience (Kirsch (1983) 334 agrees), given their erudition and autobiographical content. He also doubts a mixed audience for c. 26. Regarding c. 27, see 1.12.2.2 for a passage suggesting that ordinary people were not present when it was recited.

691 Trout (1999) 57–8.

692 See Costanza (1988) 225. Paulinus' letters were presumably also meant to be published, see Trout (1999) 16.

693 Kohlwes (1979) 213–4. For the *tugurium* see Lehmann (2004) 206–7 (also referring to Kohlwes's suggestion).

694 Mratschek (2001) 541, cf. c. 28,59: (...) *conciliisque forum late spatiabile pandit*. '(...) and this open space is suitable for gatherings.'

695 Lehmann (2004) 225–7.

696 Id. 193–4.

liturgy.⁶⁹⁷ The fact that Felix's biography is told in three parts, seems to suggest that already when he composed the first *natalicium* Paulinus had in mind to recite a *natalicium* every year.⁶⁹⁸ Apart from a possible loss of acts of Felix's life in prose—perhaps due to their replacement by Paulinus' poems—, Paulinus' endeavour to promote Felix and his own poetical achievements seem to have been zealous enough to introduce the *natalicia* in the Nolan liturgy. Maybe the *natalicia* were considered poetic acts of Felix's life. Paulinus' *carmina* 15 and 16 actually provide a description of Felix's life from his birth onwards. Given Paulinus' background and the polished style of his writings, poems other than the *natalicia* were probably written for the kind of educated audience that was also envisaged by poets like Juvenecus, Proba and Prudentius.

1.11.1 *The Apostles in Paulinus' Poetry*

The terms *apostolus*, *apostolicus* and similar forms often occur in Paulinus' oeuvre. However, these words do not always refer to the apostles, since the poet does not clearly distinguish between apostles and other martyrs, especially when he discusses the martyr cult which he himself promoted vigorously.⁶⁹⁹ Besides the Basilica vetus, Paulinus built the Basilica nova and named it Basilica apostolorum. He frequently connects the relics in his

697 The latter option is firmly rejected by Gniska (2001b) 221. Id. rejects the recitation for a mixed crowd on pp. 215–20, but admits in a later stage that this was a possibility. Recitation could have occurred in church for practical reasons, without being part of the Mass, see Gniska (2001c) 340–1 (with note 77).

698 Since no acts of Felix survive, Kirsch (1989) 206 concluded that the *natalicia* could not have been read during the mass. His argument does not seem decisive. Although it is not clear if they were read in liturgy, the hymns of Prudentius' *Peristephanon* are assumed to have been read aloud on the feast days of the saints, see Ross (1995) 351–2 (note 65).

699 For Paulinus' promotion of the martyr cult, see 1.11.3; 7. Green (1971) 80 has an inventory of passages in Paulinus' oeuvre where the apostles are mentioned, but he does not provide more than a useful enumeration. However, *magistri* in 19,151 does not refer to the apostles, *pace* Green, but to African martyrs and clergy (Walsh (1975) 380 note 35 suggests Augustine, Optatus and Alypius) and they are called *egregii* and not *ueridici*. In 27,568 it is not entirely clear to whom *magistri* refers, but probably rather to Peter and Paul alone than to the whole group of apostles (Peter is mentioned in v. 569 and Paulinus seems to refer to dogmatic writings, of which the letters of Peter and Paul in the New Testament are the most well-known apostolic examples), again *pace* Green. The verses 568–9 are rejected by Gniska (2000b) 445–8. Unless one considers the reference to Peter as metaphorical (Peter as a symbol for saints in general, which does not have an exact parallel in Paulinus' poems), Gniska should probably be followed, since the mentioning of Peter seems out of place in the context. Moreover, Nola did not have any relics of the apostle.

churches, containing apostle relics (Andrew and Thomas), the relics of John the Baptist and Luke and of non Biblical martyrs, with a notion of apostolicity.

Peter and Paul, the two most important apostles, were martyrs *par excellence*. They are once called *magistri* in Paulinus' work, but in another passage this term is attributed to all the apostles. Paul is often cited in Paulinus' work (in prose as well as in poetry) and regularly referred to as *apostolus*.⁷⁰⁰ Nola is compared to Rome and even equalled to it, which might be the reason of Paulinus emphasising the apostolicity of its relics. The apostles and Peter and Paul are also sometimes referred to as *proceres* or by their number (when all the twelve apostles are mentioned as a group). The word *discipulus* is not used very often and sometimes refers to other people than the twelve apostles.⁷⁰¹

In c. 19 (11th *natalicium*, 405), Paulinus discusses the effects of relics at length. In verses 10–34, he compares martyrs to the stars (cf. Damasus *ep.* 20,7: *noua sidera*), scattered across the world by God, called *medens* ('physician', v. 34) and *omnimedens* (v. 46): the saints are physicians sent by the Lord to cure the people.⁷⁰² In Paulinus' work, the relics of the apostles emanate the power to cure.

1.11.2 *The Apostles as a Group*

In c. 15 (4th *natalicium*), the first part of Felix's life is recounted by Paulinus (the second part is in c. 16).⁷⁰³ Felix is exalted and the East is praised as a homeland appropriate to the saint (vv. 52–6), since it also engendered the patriarchs, prophets and apostles (vv. 55–6): *unde et apostolicis fundens sua flumina linguis / totum euangelii sonus emanauit in orbem* 'From there the sound of the gospel poured forth its streams from the tongues of the apostles, and welled forth to the whole world'.⁷⁰⁴

Whereas Damasus had to admit—his proud remarks about Rome notwithstanding—that the apostles came from the East (cf. *ep.* 20, 1.5.2), Paulinus considers the oriental background of Felix's father (the saint himself was born in

700 Peter is indicated as *apostolus* in *ep.* 13,13; 13,14 and 14,16, James and John as *apostoli* in *ep.* 5,6.

701 *Discipulus*: c. 15,262 and 31,147 for the apostles, 19,342 for Timothy and *ep.* 32,5 5 for the martyr Clarus. Numbers: c. 15,262 and 27,211. *Proceres*: c. 14,65 and 21,29 for Peter and Paul; 19,51 for the apostles. Other designations for the twelve apostles are *pubis apostolicae concors coetus* (c. 27,96), *dubitantes* (c. 31,147) and *columbae* (*ep.* 32,10 5).

702 Cf. the common concept of *Christus medicus*: Van Geest (2002) 29–31. Cf. Skeb (1997) 275–6 about Christ working through the saints.

703 C. 15 and 16 together are the first known *passio poetica*, see Trout (1999) 166.

704 All translations are taken from Walsh (1975), with small adaptations, unless stated otherwise.

Italy) a contribution to his glory. Patriotism concerning the city of Rome was of course less pertinent to Paulinus than it was to the Roman bishop.

At the end of poem 15, there is another reference to the apostles: after many vicissitudes, Nola's bishop Maximus blesses Felix (who had appeared to him and had saved his life) *ore paterno / ore et apostolico* (vv. 358–9), 'with the words of a father and an apostle'. A direct link between the bishopric and the apostolic tradition is made.⁷⁰⁵ In verses 355–7 Maximus is said to ask for Christ's gifts for Felix, like Isaac blessed his son Jacob. Maybe these verses imply that a reference to the Old and New Testament should be read in *paternus* and *apostolicus*.

Elsewhere, Paulinus testifies to his endeavour to emphasise the unity in the two Testaments (e.g. in his building complex: the Basilica vetus contains a cycle of images from the New Testament, the Basilica nova from the Old Testament).⁷⁰⁶ The comparison between patriarch(s) and apostle(s) is also found in vv. 290–1 and c. 26 (8th *natalicium*).⁷⁰⁷ This poem was written under the threat of a Gothic invasion (some months later, however, the Goths were beaten by Roman troops at the battle of Pollentia, cf. Claudian's *c.m.* 50 discussed in 1.7.2). Paulinus urges the people to pray to Felix for help. After a few examples of effective prayers by Old Testament figures, Paulinus stresses the power of Felix in his own days (vv. 276–306): *nam patriarchum, Felix, et filius aequae / stirpis apostolicae es, tanti non degener heres / seminis* 'For, Felix, you are alike the son of patriarchs and stock of the apostles; you are an heir who has not fallen below his great ancestry' (vv. 283–5). Again, the patriarchs and apostles are put on a par to illustrate Felix's power and status and his connection to both Testaments, i.e. to the period *sub lege* and *sub gratia* (cf. Gregory of Nazianzus' poems 1.1,13 and 1.1,19, discussed in 1.9.1). The saint is presented as a direct descendant of Christ's first followers.

In c. 27 (9th *natalicium*), the Nolan complex is described on the occasion of Nicetas' second visit to Paulinus. After Paulinus' greetings to Nicetas (vv. 148–83),

705 Maybe reinforced by the fact that earlier in the same poem (c. 15,260–5), Felix is compared to Peter, the apostle par excellence, see 1.11.5. Cf. *ep.* 32,15 where the bishop of Nola, Paulus (sic), is also said to speak *apostolico ore*: *Plebs gemina Christum Felicis adorat in aula / Paulus apostolico quam temperat ore sacerdos*. Notice the significant position of *Christus* and *Felix* next to each other. In the same way, *Paulus* and *apostolicus* are emphasised, even more so by *ore sacerdos*: the hyperbaton *Paulus . . . sacerdos* "encloses" the apostolic teachings (*apostolico . . . ore*).

706 For these painting cycles see e.g. Lehmann (2004) 214–5 and Korol (1987). Cf. 1.11.

707 Cf. c. 31: Paulinus emphasises that Christians have a hope which others have not (vv. 381–426). This hope is expressed by Paul, in the gospels, by the patriarchs, by the prophets and in the book of the history of the apostles (v. 396).

he praises Felix (vv. 184–99) and invokes him (vv. 200–21). He also invokes the other saints who dwell with Felix in heaven (Felix's *parentes*, v. 205), first described in vv. 209–12:

Pulcher apostolici chorus agminis et patriarchae,
gens prior, ambo chori procerum, quos agmine bino
per duodena deus signavit nomina patres
gentibus et populis regnum ad caeleste uocandis (...).

You splendid group of the apostolic troop and you, patriarchs, you are a race preferred, two troops of princes; in your twin lines God has marked you out with your twelve names as fathers to summon nations and peoples to the kingdom of heaven.

Thereafter, Paulinus mentions the prophets (vv. 213–4) and martyrs (vv. 215–6). The connection between the patriarchs and apostles deserves special attention in Paulinus' view, it seems. Together, they are highly praised and separated from the prophets and martyrs. Their similar number is emphasised (cf. c.15,262; 1.12.1.2.2). Again, the Old and New Testament are connected by the patriarchs and apostles (cf. Rev 21.12–4), as is the case in Prudentius' oeuvre (see *ditt.* 48,193–4 with the phrase *bis duodena*, comparable to Paulinus' *bino duodena*).

The apostolic writings appear in c.19 (11th *natalicium*), verses 34–44. Christ is presented as the physician who treats people blinded by *error* and *aegra fides* (vv. 28–9) with a *collyrium*, a liquid eye-salve.⁷⁰⁸ Paulinus adds (vv. 35–8):

Quod per apostolicas curandis sensibus artes
cote pia teritur, quia lene iugum et leue Christi
est onus ad Christum puro iam lumine uersis
atque euangelico suffusis pectora suco.

This salve is ground on a holy grindstone by the skills of the apostles, to heal men's senses, since Christ's yoke is mild and his burden light for those who are turned to Christ with eyes now restored and hearts filled with the Gospeldraught.

⁷⁰⁸ See L&S s.v.; cf. e.g. Aug. *ciu.* 7,8,12 and *Vita Martini* 19 according to which Paulinus had been cured from an eye disease by saint Martin; if this story is true, it might explain his use of the term here. Otherwise, Rev 3.18 may have influenced Paulinus' use of the term (cf. also *ep.* 45,1).

Verses 39–44 emphasise the effectiveness of the salve. The apostles are working as physicians, which might reflect their mission stated by Christ in Matt 10 (esp. Matt 10.1 and 8). At the same time, this function of the apostles is in accordance with certain apocryphal stories. However, in the canonical gospel of Luke, Christ is presented as a physician.⁷⁰⁹ The apostles' writings are also presented as curative by *euangelico*... *suco* (cf. also the quotation of Matt 11.30 in vv. 36–7). Elsewhere, Paulinus emphasises that the apostles speak the truth (their testimony of Jesus' works is trustworthy).

In the same passage, Paulinus tries to rival the twelve: they saw (cf. c. 31,370) and touched Jesus, whereas the poet himself believes out of faith (c. 31,375–6): *nam quod ueridici sese uidisse magistri / et palpassse docent, tango fide et uideo* 'What our truthful masters teach us that they have seen and felt, I touch and see by faith' (cf. John 20.29). This view of one's own abilities and qualities is quite different from the humble opinion of Commodianus, who called himself a flea (*Instr.* 1,31,8–9, see 1.1.1) in comparison to the apostle Paul. Earlier in the same poem, Paulinus has already presented himself as more perseverant than the apostle Thomas (c.31,151–4, 1.11.8). Apparently, Paulinus' far-going role as an intermediary between 'his' people and Felix could be compared to that of the apostles without causing offense. This accounts for the prestige of Paulinus and the important position he had created for himself in Nola.

Another important aspect of the apostolic tradition, their being predecessors of the (Roman) bishops, is also mentioned by Paulinus. *Carmen* 25 (written between 400 and 406) is an epithalamium for Julian of Elanum (son of a bishop) and Titia, in elegiac distichs.⁷¹⁰ Paulinus incites the young couple to an austere wedding party. The bride should wear a plain dress (vv. 39–90), since she moves in with someone from an episcopal family (*gentis apostolicae*, v. 62).⁷¹¹ Paulinus uses the word *apostolicus* in the same sense in verse 218, in a passage comparing Memor, Julian's father, to bishop Aemilius.⁷¹²

Only one Biblical passage in which the apostles as a group play a role is recounted in a more elaborate way by Paulinus. In the first 134 verses of c. 27,

709 Bovon (2008b) 213 (note 106).

710 The poem is discussed in Wachel (1978) 237–56 and commented upon by Bouma (1968).

711 Cf. Blaise s.v. *apostolicus*. This explanation is already found in Bouma (1968) 60. Wachel (1978) 242 considers the term to refer to Christian families in general.

712 C. 25,199–230 with *apostolicam*... *canitiem* in 218. *Canitiem* here seems especially convenient since it can mean 'dignity' (Souter s.v.) as well as it can refer to age (Blaise s.v.: "blancheur"). Memor and Julian are both bishops: Paulinus emphasises that Julian is younger than Memor, but has been bishop for a longer time. For *apostolicus* cf. also c. 15 discussed above.

Paulinus elaborates on some Christian themes, like the divine gifts of Christ (vv. 43–71), the way in which God acts (vv. 72–92) and the Holy Spirit (vv. 93–106). In the last passage, the descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2.2–13) is retold in hexameters (95–106). Several references to classical poetry add to the lustre of the scene, without bringing the original context of the allusions into Paulinus' poems.⁷¹³ The apostles are introduced by the phrase: (...) *igneus illic, / pubis apostolicae concors ubi coetus agebat, / (...) sedit quasi flamma per omnes* (...), 'He (i.e. the Holy Spirit) was fiercely present there, where the harmony of the apostolic gathering held a meeting, he was on all of them like a flame.'⁷¹⁴ The *concordia* among the apostles is emphasised and contrasted to *diuiduis... linguis* (v. 101) and *uarias... uoces* (v. 102). Verse 99 also draws attention to the difference between unity and diversity. After this passage, Paulinus points to the importance of Christian feast days. When *carmen* 27 was recited, Whitsun was only recently established as a separate feast day (instead as part of the fifty liturgical days after Easter).⁷¹⁵

In one other passage a reference to Jesus' manifestation to the apostles is made: c. 31,147–8 (cf. Matt 28.17; Mark 16.9–14; Luke 24.9–12 and especially John 20.20 which seems to act as the foil for v. 148). The apostles are called *dubitantes* (v. 147), which is justified by the Biblical account of their doubts about Jesus' Resurrection. Christ's manifestation is described by the words *obtulit ultro* (v. 147): this is a reference to Verg. *Aen.* 8,611, where Venus addresses Aeneas. Whereas Juvenecus and Proba often compared Christ to Aeneas via intertextual references, Paulinus in this passage compares Christ indirectly to a Roman god(dess) speaking to one of his protégés.⁷¹⁶ Thereafter, a lengthy discussion of doubting Thomas follows (vv. 149–216, see 1.11.8).

Epistula 32, sent by Paulinus to Sulpicius Severus, contains several poetic passages that are *tituli* composed for Severus' complex dedicated to Martin of Tours in Primuliacum and *tituli* attached to the walls in Paulinus' buildings in

713 Pelttari (2014) 134–7. This non-referentiality is not unique for this passage or for Paulinus, but a general feature of late antique poetry as Pelttari argues in his book.

714 C. 27,95–8. My translation. Walsh (1975) 273 renders "the harmonious gathering of young apostles", but according to my view there is no reason not to attribute the general poetic meaning of 'group' to the word *pubes*, rather than 'young men'. This passage does not seem to justify the specific use of the word.

715 See LThK (8,187–9) s.v. Pfingsten, pfingstfest II. Liturgisch (Adam). Cf. Boeckh (1960) about the connection of the feast days with the fifty day period.

716 The combination of words is rather rare, which makes it plausible to assume that an educated reader or listener would recognise the reference: the only two other occasions in Latin poetry where this formula occurs before Paulinus are *cento* 182 (its use does not seem to bear special significance there) and Stat. *Theb.* 9,481.

Nola and Fundi.⁷¹⁷ Severus and Paulinus had much in common regarding their background as well as their religious projects, aiming at exalting one particular saint on a large scale.⁷¹⁸ Although Severus' letters do not remain, thirteen letters of Paulinus to the promoter of Martin have been preserved, from the period 395–404. Letter 32 probably dates from 403.⁷¹⁹

In the tenth section of the letter Paulinus describes the central mosaic in the apse of the Basilica nova.⁷²⁰ He provides the *titulus* of the mosaic, which is a description and an explanation at the same time. It was probably painted on the wall in two rows of seven lines (verses 1–7 and 8–14).⁷²¹ According to Paulinus, the apostles were depicted there as doves, encircling the cross in the air.⁷²² The symbol of a dove for the apostles was not unusual.⁷²³ The number of doves depicted is normally thought to be twelve, the number of the apostles. Tomas Lehmann has argued that a marble plate from the fifth or sixth century found in the crypt of the Nolan dome depicts a copy of a part of the apse mosaic (a cross encircled by flowers and doves). The number of doves, however, is restricted here to five or six instead of twelve, due to a lack of

717 This letter is one of the most discussed texts of Paulinus. Paragraphs 10–17 aroused much interest and are commented upon by Goldschmidt (1940) 93–128 (with introduction, text and translation on pp. 35–47) and more recently by Lehmann (2004) 165–91 (introduction and translation on pp. 148–65). Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 25–210 (including translation, introduction on pp. 21–5) has commented on the whole letter. Paulinus mentioned not all the *tituli* in his letter, as he himself states in *ep.* 32,12, see Lehmann (1992) 260.

718 For Paulinus and Severus, see *ep.* 32,10 and e.g. Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 21–2. Paulinus had allegedly been cured from an eye disease by Martin (according to *Vita Martini* 19), see above. This might explain his interest in the saint.

719 Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 123.

720 The *titulus* is written in iambic dimeters whereas all the other *tituli* in *ep.* 32 are written in hexameters and distichs. Lehmann (2004) 167–8 has argued that this is due to the fact that two terms central to the theme of the mosaic, *unitas* and *trinitas*, do not fit into hexameters. For an analysis of the mosaic see e.g. Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 113–24, Lehmann (2004) 166–8, Engemann (1974) 21–6 and Bijvanck (1929). Paulinus not only sent *tituli* to Severus, but probably also paintings of the mosaics and possibly some plans of the church, see Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 97–8.

721 Lehmann (1992) 254–6.

722 See *ep.* 32,10 verses 4–6: *Crucem corona lucido cingit globo, / cui coronae sunt corona apostoli, / quorum figura est in columbarum choro.*

723 Cf. *ep.* 32,14 3 and Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 183–4. The symbol of the dove was not restricted to the apostles alone, see in general id. 114–5 (note 75) and TIP s.v. Colomba (Mazzei); cf. in Paulinus' *ep.* 32, section 14 (verse 7), where he refers to Christians with the word *columbas*, and 1.10.5.

space. This is not an unusual feature in early Christian art, but without further evidence Lehmann's theory remains hypothetical.⁷²⁴

The Trinity was central to the message of the mosaic and the inscription accompanying it. In the traditional reconstruction of the mosaic, for the iconography of which *ep.* 32 is our only source, twelve lambs are also depicted, divided in two groups of six lambs at either side of the holy lamb standing on a rock which pours out four streams. However, Paulinus does not mention these lambs in his *titulus*; they were probably not represented.⁷²⁵

1.11.3 *The Individual Apostles*

Peter and Paul are mentioned more often than the other apostles, as is common in early Christian poetry in general. Especially Paul is often mentioned alone (partly because Paulinus frequently quotes his writings). He is called *magister*, but this word is not attributed exclusively to him, as is the case with *apostolus*.⁷²⁶ Andrew, Thomas and John are also mentioned a few times, which has partly to do with the presence of the relics of the two former apostles in Nola. Lebbeus, Matthew and Philip are referred to only once (see below). Mostly, these apostles are called by their name, although John and Andrew are also called *lumina* (c. 19,80, maybe referring to Matt 5,14).⁷²⁷

Paulinus is the first poet to name the regions where the cult of an individual apostle gained particular popularity (*carmen* 19).⁷²⁸ He mentions a rather

724 Lehmann (2004) 167. Some tiny fragments of the apse mosaic remain, see Lehmann (2010) 104.

725 I agree with Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 124 on this point. But see Engemann (1974) 24: "Womit sollten die Seitenflächen der Apsiswölbung sonst gefüllt gewesen sein?" The traditional reconstruction, made by Wickhoff in 1889 (reprinted in Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 529), is based on analogy with the mosaics in the S. Apollinare in Classe and on Paulinus' description of his church in Fundi.

726 Paulus as *magister*: c. 24,286; 25,179; 31,355 and 31,557. Peter and Paul as *magistri*: c. 27,568. All apostles as *magistri*: 19,53 and 31,375. Elsewhere, God (c. 20,51), Christ (c. 10,52), Augustine (*ep.* 8,83) and Maximus (c. 16,51), among others, are also designated as *magister* (its stem occurring 31 times in Paulinus' poetry). Paulus as *apostolus*: c. 20,437; 24,272; 24,291 and 31,393. Thomas is called *apostolus* in c. 31,149.

727 Peter and Paul: c. 13,30; 14,66; 14,88; 19,54; 19,340–2; 21,7; 21,29; Also as *medici* (c. 19,55) and *patres* (c. 21,7). Paul: c. 19,97; 21,65; 24,286; 24,290; 31,209. The latter verse seems now rightly rejected as unauthentic: Gnllka (2000b) 448–51 (mentioning "der wichtigstuerische Zusatz des Apostelnamens", p. 451). Peter: c. 15,263; 20,245; 20,248; 26,374; 27,569 (two times, but maybe interpolated, see 1.11.1, note 699). Andrew: c. 19,78; 19,336; 27,406; *ep.* 32,27 5. John: c. 19,78; 19,95; 20,245; 22,53. Thomas: c. 19,81; 27,415 (as Thomas and Didymus); 31,152; 31,153.

728 As such, he is also the first testimony of the existence of lists of the apostles in the West, according to Dolbeau (2012) 178.

unusual selection of the apostles: Lebbaeus (v. 82), Matthew (v. 81), Philip (v. 82), Thomas (v. 81) and John and Andrew (v. 78; John also in v. 95).⁷²⁹ Peter and Paul are mentioned earlier in the same poem (v. 54, Paul also in vv. 96–7).⁷³⁰ Consequently, six apostles are missing in Paulinus' poetic oeuvre: James son of Zebedee, James son of Alphaeus, Bartholomew, Simon and Matthias could have been mentioned, as well as Judas.⁷³¹ There seems to be no specific reason for the omission of the first five apostles, however.⁷³² Instead, Paulinus does mention all the evangelists (besides Matthew and John—see below—he mentions Luke in v. 83 and Mark in vv. 84–5). Paulinus does not give depth to the apostles' characters and biographies. Consequently, the depiction of the apostles is in sharp contrast to that of Felix. The Nolan patron saint is central to Paulinus' message in such a way that other Christian saints are mainly named to contribute to his status or to the prestige of Christianity in general. Given Paulinus' large oeuvre, one would expect that the apostles are mentioned more often than they actually are. His letters show a similar pattern in this respect.⁷³³

It is remarkable not to find Judas mentioned in any of Paulinus' verses. Commodianus, Damasus, Ambrose and Amphilochius also left him out, but they wrote a much smaller (poetic) oeuvre. In *epistula* 23,34 Paulinus refers to the price of the unguent used by a woman to anoint Jesus in Matt 26.8 (criticised by Judas) compared to the reward for Judas' betrayal (which according to Paulinus was thirty pieces of gold instead of the pieces of silver mentioned in the Bible: he probably cited by heart). Paulinus also mentions Judas' kiss in *epistula* 24,16. The reason for the absence of Judas in Paulinus' poetry might be the poet's emphasis on the martyrs' cult in his poetry. Passages in which Biblical stories are versified are also scarce in Paulinus' oeuvre.⁷³⁴

729 The *diuisio apostolorum* is described in Mark 15,15. It was commemorated on 15 July, see TRE 3 s.v. Apostel/Apostolat/Apostolizität (Hartman) 476 (note 3).

730 Green (1971) 79 points to the fact that Paulinus mentions "an extremely large number" of Old and New Testament figures by name.

731 Judas is mentioned in *ep.* 23,34 and *ep.* 24,16. Other apostles mentioned in Paulinus' letters are Paul, Peter, John and Thomas (ordered in diminishing frequency).

732 Paulinus does not mention these apostles anywhere in his writings; see De Hartel (1999a), *index nominum*.

733 The index on Paulinus' letters in Skeb (1998b) reveals that Paul is the apostle who is mentioned by far most often, followed by Peter. John is mentioned in three letters, Judas in two and Thomas in one. The vocation of John and James seems to be referred to in *ep.* 5,6 (the two apostles are only indicated as *apostoli*), but maybe Paulinus rather intended to refer to the vocation of all the apostles (*exemplo apostolorum relicto patri in nauicula fluctuante* refers to Matt 4.21 but Paulinus might have had other vocations in mind).

734 Paulinus wrote four Bible versifications: c. 6 (John the Baptist), 7 (psalm 1), 8 (psalm 2) and 9 (psalm 137), none of them concerning passages in which the apostles play a part.

1.11.4 *Paul*

The apostle Paul plays an important role in Paulinus' work.⁷³⁵ In many instances he is cited as a source of inspiration. Nevertheless, Paulinus recounts only one Biblical story about Paul which had not been versified before: his exorcism of the evil spirit in a slave who predicted the future with the help of Apollo (Acts 16.16–8). In c. 19, Paulinus elaborates on the topic of God governing the whole world. He enumerates regions under protection of Christian patrons (vv. 76–84), thereby mentioning several apostles (see below). Thereafter, he provides some examples of apostolic miracles and defeats of Satan (vv. 84–110). The victory of Christianity over paganism is expressed in triumphant images, ending with examples from Greece (vv. 91–7):

- (...) uana nec ulterius mutos iam Graecia Delphos
 consuleret spernensque suum calcaret Olympum
 altius in Sion gradiens, ubi collis alumni
 lene iugum celso fastigat uertice Christus.
 95 Fugit et ex Epheso trudente Diana Iohanne
 germanum comitata suum, quem nomine Christi
 inperitans Paulus pulso Pythone fugauit.

And Greece does not superfluously consult further Delphi now silent, but rather despises and grinds underfoot her own Olympus as she mounts higher to Sion, where Christ sets high his soft yoke on the lofty summit of that nourished hill.⁷³⁶ Diana, too, has fled from Ephesus, for John has thrust her out; she accompanied her brother, whom Paul, ordering in Christ's name, at the expulsion of the Python drove away.

John's presence in Ephesus was part of an old apocryphal tradition.⁷³⁷ Paulinus connects this story to the Biblical account of the expulsion by Paul of an evil spirit in a servant prophesying in name of Apollo, described in Acts 16.16–8. Besides the link between Apollo and Artemis which is hinted at openly by the poet, another Biblical story also comes to mind: Acts 19.23–40, in which a silversmith entices a protest against Paul since he fears for the future of his

735 See e.g. Skeb (1998a) 56–8.

736 The word *alumnus* is problematic here. Walsh (1975) renders 'kindly', but the word normally means 'nourished', whereas 'nourishing' is also attested in late antiquity, see Blaise s.v. It could be understood in both senses in this passage: the hill is spiritually nourished by its function in Christian history, hence it is a spiritually inspiring ('nourishing') place in Paulinus' time.

737 See Walsh (1975) 378 (note 11) for further literature; cf. e.g. Eus. *h.e.* 3.1; 3.31; 5.8.

business in scale models of the famous Artemis temple in Ephesus. Paul's command over pagan superstition, as Paulinus saw it, is emphasised by the alliteration in verse 97.

Other references to Paul have to do with his writings.⁷³⁸ The most significant passage is found in c. 24. This large poem in iambic distichs (942 verses), is a letter to Cytherius, written probably around 400. In the second part (vv. 439–942), Cytherius and his wife are advised about the upbringing of their son. In the first part, Paulinus tells about an adventure at sea of Martinianus, who was sent with a letter to Paulinus by the same Cytherius.⁷³⁹ Martinianus endured shipwreck (21–162), but he was saved (vv. 163–204) and is therefore compared to Jonah (vv. 239–62), whose Biblical story is versified (vv. 205–38). When Martinianus reached dry land, he awoke with Paul's epistles next to him (vv. 263–98).⁷⁴⁰ This passage deserves to be quoted in full:

Aliud stupendum, quo fidelem gratiam
 Martiniani colligas,
 265 dilecte frater, accipe et lauda deum
 sanctumque fratrem amplectere:
 ut adlabentem portui sensit ratem
 stridente harena litoris,
 abeunte somno fit sui tandem memor
 270 recipitque sese, expergitus
 et adiacentes pectori tangit suo
 epistolas apostoli.
 Hunc in pauore codicem sed nesciens
 rebus relictis sumpserat,
 275 uel ille codex spiritu uiuens sacro
 non sentienti adhaeserat.
 Metire, quaeso, quis nisi Christus suo
 dedit hunc ministro praesulem?
 Testatur iste cogitatum nec sibi
 280 illo pericli tempore,

738 In several instances, Paulinus refers to Paul only to introduce a Biblical quotation, e.g. c. 21,65 (referring to 1 Phlm 2). See also *apostolus* in c. 20,437 (1 Cor 9.9). In Paulinus' poems, I did not find the interrogation of Paul referred to by Hempel (1963) 594, discussed (as a theme in early Christian and mediaeval art) by Korol (2004) 162–4.

739 The disparate topics notwithstanding, the poem is a unity, see Walsh (1976).

740 Cf. Paulinus' *ep.* 49,10–1 about the shipwreck of Valgius, where Jonah's (10) and Paul's (11) shipwreck are also mentioned together.

ut inplicatam sarcinis membranulam
 meminisset illinc tollere.
 Quod si subisset in metu mentem suam,
 non et uacasset quaerere.
 285 Sed in suarum litterarum corpore
 Paulus magister adfuit
 amansque puro corde lectorem sui
 de mortis abduxit manu;
 iterum eximendos e maris fundo uiros
 290 largitus est Paulo deus.
 Quae quondam in ipso nauigante apostolo
 fuit potestas gratiae,
 haec nunc per eius suffragata litteras
 Martiniano et ceteris,
 295 qui Christianis tunc cohaeserunt fuga,
 discrimen a discrimine
 tutum parauit, ut fideles inpiis
 discriminarat naufragos.

Dear brother, praise God and embrace your holy brother as you hear this further astonishing incident through which you can grasp the grace which Martinianus gained by faith. When he realised from the boat's grating on the sand of the shore that the boat was gliding into harbour, sleep left him. He came to himself and finally remembered who he was. As he awoke, he touched Paul's epistles which lay next to his heart. In the panic when he left all else behind, he had unconsciously lifted this book, or else the book which is alive with the Holy Spirit had attached itself to him without his knowledge. Ponder this, I beg you: who but Christ provided for his servant this protector? He (i.e. Martinianus) bears witness that at the moment of crisis he did not think to remember to remove the tiny manuscript wrapped in his rucksack. Even if the thought had entered his fearstruck mind, there would have been no time to look for it. But the master Paul was at hand in the physical presence of his epistles. He loved this man who read him with a pure⁷⁴¹ heart, and so he took him away from the hand of death. Once more God bestowed on Paul the deliverance of men from the depths of the sea. That same power of grace which the apostle possessed when he was himself afloat had now through his letters lent support to Martinianus; and for the others who then in their flight clung fast to

741 Walsh (1975) 228 translates 'chaste', but in this context it rather seems to mean 'orthodox', see Blaise s.v. *purus*.

the Christians, it made harmless the danger which followed their danger, just as it had separated the believers amongst the shipwrecked from the godless.

Paulinus' account of this miracle is exemplary for his ideas about saints and their power. Not only could relics connected to saints strengthen the faith of pilgrims, the writings of a holy man could also bring prosperity because the saint was present in them (*Sed in suarum litterarum corpore / Paulus magister adfuit*, vv. 285–6). Paulinus explains at length that the event is a miracle (vv. 273–84), as he used to explain the working of saints in an extensive way elsewhere in his oeuvre. Paul is called *magister*, in conformity with other verses in Paulinus' oeuvre where the poet quotes Paul's letters. The most elaborate example is found in c. 31,557–8 (for which see below): *hoc etenim in uerbo domini docet ille magister / quo duce sidereas nitimur ire uias*.⁷⁴² Paul is presented as the leader who brings people to heaven (*sidereas . . . uias*). The idea of saints as intercessors between God and men is also clearly expressed in c. 24 (the *potestas gratiae* is bestowed upon Paul, see v. 292). The writings of Paul are the subject of the shipwreck pericope in c. 24, but Paulinus probably also tried to promote his own writings about Felix (who had not left any written trace himself) through this story.⁷⁴³ The story and praise for Paul are skilfully combined on a verbal level: Martinianus finds next to his heart (vv. 271–2 *suo pectori*) the letters of Paul, the apostle who is said to love people who read him with a pure heart (v. 287, *puro corde*). Paulinus shows a desire to praise Paul, one of the most famous apostles whom he also mentions most often in his letters and poems.⁷⁴⁴ The miracle might also reveal religious practice: in his

742 'For in the Lord's word this is what the master teaches, on whose guidance we rely to tread the ways of stars.' This phrase introduces a quotation of 1 Thess 4.16. Cf. c. 25,179 (introducing Gal 3.28) and c. 31,355 (2 Cor 5.17 and 2 Cor 3.18). About the term *magister* in Paulinus' oeuvre see Bouma (1968) 96. Paul is also designated with the word *magister* by other writers, e.g. in Dam. *ep.* 1,24.

743 Maybe there is also a (indirect) reference in Paulinus' poem to Damasus *ep.* 1 on Paul, which preceded an edition of his letters, see 1.5.4.

744 If Paulinus invented the story—or the name of its main character—, he might have wanted to refer to the apocryphal story of Peter's water miracle, according to which Peter baptized to soldiers, called Processus and Martinianus, when he was in prison. This scene was well known and very often depicted on sarcophagi. Walsh (1976) 40 does not pay much attention to the Martinianus passage, but accepts the story as the genuine recording of an existing story: "But it would be an unworthy suspicion to suggest that Paulinus has invented the detail of Martinianus' carrying Paul's epistles on his person merely for apposite scriptural instruction", referring to Acts 27.13 sqq. Martinianus was most probably named after Saint Martin, venerated by Sulpicius Severus who sent him.

commentary on John, Augustine states that, in case of a headache it is better to put the Gospel of John under one's head instead of an amulet, suggesting that both acts were not unusual.⁷⁴⁵

In general, the story of Martinianus attests to the wide-spread popularity of Pauline literature and the use of his letters, which are already mentioned as "travel-literature" (in Latin!) in *Acta Scillitanorum* 12.⁷⁴⁶ Cytherius had entrusted his son to Sulpicius Severus, the writer of the famous *Vita Martini*: the name of Martinianus seems to reflect the interest in Saint Martin in circles surrounding Severus. Martin of Tour's alleged preference for the apostle Paul might then be an additional explanation for Martinianus bearing (fictively or in reality) Paul's letters.⁷⁴⁷

Verses 289–98 refer to Paul's shipwreck described in Acts 27.13–44, which would also become the subject of Prudentius' *c. Symm. praef.* 1. There seem to be no similarities to this poem (both poems are probably written around 400). Paulinus slightly changes the content of the Biblical story, however, by suggesting that only God-fearing people are saved, whereas Acts 27.24 reads πάντας τοὺς πλέοντας.

Given the fact that Paul is indicated by the word *apostolus* several times (*c.* 20,437; 24,272 and 291), he is presumably also meant in *c.* 31,393: this poem is an *epikedeion* to the parents of the boy Celsus, who died when he was 8 years old. In verses 381–426 Paulinus urges them to rejoice since Christians have the prospect of an afterlife, which the heathens have not. Their *insolabile pectus* (389) is contrasted with Christian consolation (393): *nobis ore Dei solator apostolus adsit* 'But the apostle may attend to console us through the mouth of God.' The gospel, the examples of the fathers and the prophets and the Book of Acts are also called upon (*vv.* 394–6).

1.11.5 *Peter*

Peter is mentioned only a few times without Paul. Two times he is compared to Felix, the saint who was central to all activities of Paulinus. In poem 15, in which the life of Felix is told, Paulinus recounts the release of Felix by an angel (*vv.* 238–57): Felix is liberated to rescue the Nolan bishop Maximus. The parallel with Peter's release from prison (Acts 12.6–10) is evident from the beginning, but Paulinus adds a paragraph through which he makes this more explicit (*c.* 15,260–5):

745 Aug. *Io.eu.tr.* 124, written probably some twenty years after Paulinus' poem.

746 See a discussion in Eastman (2011) 157–9. Cf. for Christian "travel-literature" in general Sulpicius Severus calling the *Vita Martini* Postumianus' *terra ac mari comes* in *Dial.* 1,23.

747 For Martin and Paul see Eastman (2011) 137–41.

- 260 (...) Veterem remeare recenti
 historia uideo speciem, qua iussus abire
 bissono sublimis in agmine discipulorum
 Petrus sponte sua uinclis labentibus eque
 carcere processit clauso, qua praeuius illum
 265 angelus Herodi praedam furatus agebat.

In this modern event I see the occurrence of old when Peter (supreme amongst the two times sixfold column of disciples) was commanded to depart, and of his own accord emerged from the parting fetters and the barred prison—along the path where the angel preceded as a guide—and so robbed the booty of Herod.

Paulinus has condensed the Biblical account. Nevertheless, he also adds something: praise for Peter. In the Bible, the angel bursts Peter's chains through speech only; Peter only follows the angel and does not even realise that his release is actually taking place (he assumes he is dreaming: Acts 12.9). According to Paulinus, however, Peter left prison *sponte sua* (v. 263). Moreover, Peter is explicitly praised as outstanding among the disciples (*sublimis*, v. 262).

In c. 20,241–51 the cure of the paralysed in the *Porta speciosa* is mentioned (Acts 3,1–10). Paulinus compares a man healed by Felix (c. 20,62–300) with the paralysed man from the book of Acts. As in Prudentius' account (the only other early Christian poet to versify this Biblical story, see *ditt.* 45,181–4, 1.10.4), the focus is on Peter, although John was also present. Paulinus does mention the latter apostle (*claudentem... Petrus atque Johannes / iusserunt... exsurgere*, vv. 245–6), but thereafter only Peter is compared to Felix. Describing the man cured by Felix, Paulinus adds (vv. 247–9): *dignus et hic pauper speciosae limine portae / quem deus ipse, Petri deus et Felicis, (...) / (...) sanauit*.⁷⁴⁸ Felix is again placed in line with Peter, although the latter is mentioned first. John is not mentioned in this comparison: Felix apparently should only be compared with the most outstanding apostle (cf. *sublimis*, c. 15,262). All Biblical elements

748 'This poor man, too, became worthy of the threshold of the beautiful gate, for God himself, the God of Peter and Felix has (...) healed him (...)' With *speciosa porta*, Paulinus names the characteristic indicating the Biblical miracle. He might also try to refer with subtlety towards the temple he built for Felix and in which place the man compared to the paralysed in the *Porta speciosa* was cured by Felix. In *ep.* 23,34 Paulinus also refers to this miracle, emphasising that Petrus was *diues* but not through money but through his power to cure. This is in contrast with the passage above, where Paulinus emphasises that it is God who healed.

indicating time and place (Acts 3.1–3, except for the *porta speciosa*), bystanders (Acts 3.9–10) and the expectations of the beggar (Acts 3.3–6) are omitted by Paulinus, a scriptural frugality that is comparable to Juvenecus' versification technique.

Peter is not only compared to Felix, but also to Moses. In c. 26 Paulinus refers to numerous Old Testament Biblical *exempla* (see esp. vv. 80–295), trying to assure his audience of God's power in a time when Alaric had just invaded Italy.⁷⁴⁹ He emphasises that miracles still occur, in his days by intercession of Felix (vv. 276–306). In every period, different saints work different miracles (vv. 283–94 and 366–83). This can be seen in the Old and New Testament (vv. 370–2): *Cernite distinctos actu sed honore iugatos / testamentorum ueterisque nouique magistros, / in quibus una dedit geminas sapientia leges*. 'Note how the teachers of the Old and New Testament differ in their deeds but are paired in glory, for the one wisdom issued twin laws in them (*the two testaments*).' In verses 374–8, Paulinus elaborates on an example (before in passing comparing Daniel to Felix, vv. 380–1):

Non Petrus inrupit uirga mare, sed neque Moyses
 375 aequoris incessit liquido; tamen unus utrique
 fulget honos, unus quoniam fuit auctor utrique
 scindere aquas uirga, pedibus calcare fluentia,
 qui deus est ueterum in sanctis, deus ipse nouorum.

Peter did not divide the sea with a rod, but then Moses did not walk on the waters. However, both have the same bright glory, for the one creator inspired both the cleavage of the waters with a rod and the treading of the waves underfoot. The God of the saints of old is also the God of the new.

Moses is the representative of the Old Testament, as Peter represents the New. In iconography they are closely related since they performed a similar miracle (see 2.2.2.1.1): they made water pour out of a rock by striking it (for Moses see Exod 17.5–6 and Num 20.7–11, the provenance of Peter's story is unclear⁷⁵⁰).⁷⁵¹ Paulinus might have had the idea of contrasting the two stories from these passages, especially since the stories were depicted in a very

749 Evenepoel (1999) discusses this poem with specific attention to the embedding of the Biblical exempla in the contemporary political situation.

750 See Fabricius (1956) 97–103.

751 Cf. Brockhaus (1872) 241–3.

similar way. It is often difficult to distinguish between them.⁷⁵² In Paulinus' passage, however, differences are emphasised. Peter did not divide the sea (cf. Exod 14.21) and Moses did not walk on the waves (cf. Matt 14.22–33). The miracles are only mentioned, without any further details. Paulinus' account, therefore, cannot be compared to those of Juvenius (*evang.* 3,93–126, 1.2.3.1) and Prudentius (*perist.* 7,61–5; *ditt.* 35,137–40; c. *Symm. praef* 2,1–43, see 1.10.4). The description as Paulinus has it bears no verbal references to these poets. Peter is honoured, being presented as the Biblical character symbolising the New Testament and equalled to the leader of Jews in the Old Testament.

Paulinus also refers to Peter in a passage that is most illuminating regarding actual practices in the Nolan complex. In c. 27 Paulinus delivers a justification of the use of images in a church (i.e. his own, vv. 542–95): in their defence he explains that they are useful, since most pilgrims cannot read. Moreover these people are used to pictures and they cannot help asking for them: they are good men, but not too clever (vv. 565–9):

565 (...) nec tantae conscia culpa
simplicitas pietate cadit, male credula sanctos
perfusis halante mero gaudere sepulchris.
Ergo probant obiti quod damnauere magistri?
Mensa Petri recepit quod Petri dogma refutat?

Their naivety—unconscious of the extent for their guilt—does not fall through devotion, although it wrongly believes that saints are delighted to have their tombs doused with reeking wine. But how can the saints approve after death what they condemned in their teaching? Does Peter's table admit what Peter's doctrine rejects?

Paulinus refers to 1 Petr 4.3 here, where inebriety and exuberance are condemned. The passage shows Paulinus' fatherly care for the pilgrims in Nola (vv. 572–9 blames the devil for intruding in Felix's house and make people drink). It is also clear from this passage that c. 27 was not spoken to a broad audience, but in private, to Nicetas and his companions. Peter is called a *magister*, in accordance with the use of this word for Paul before one of his writings is cited or referred to (see 1.11.4). Maybe Paulinus intended to make his audience think of the two principal apostles by using the word *magistri*.

⁷⁵² See e.g. Dresken-Weiland (2011a) 130–3. But other writers also compare 'water wonders' of Peter and Moses, cf. e.g. Asterius of Amasea *hom.* 8,10 (exalting Peter above Moses and Joshua).

Paulinus refers to Peter's status as the rock of the Church (Matt 16:18) only once. Apparently the apse mosaic of the Basilica nova included a picture of Christ as the Lamb of God, standing on a rock out of which four streams were flowing (*ep.* 32,10 verses 12–4).⁷⁵³ But the first verse of the passage also seems to refer to Peter: *Petram superstat ipse petra ecclesiae* 'the rock itself of the Church stands on a rock'.⁷⁵⁴ The fact that the text clearly is about Christ only reinforces the compliment to Peter, which is inherent to this designation. In one of his letters, Paulinus uses the name Peter as a metonym for Rome (*ep.* 47,1) and also calls Delphinus someone who was *Petrus nobis esse factum* 'made a Peter for us' (i.e. he brought Paulinus to Christianity).⁷⁵⁵

1.11.6 *The Pair of Peter and Paul*

Someone as fond of the veneration of saints as Paulinus could not leave the relics of the two principal apostles aside. These were some of the most important relics and since they were in Rome, Paulinus refers to them in c. 13, in a significant comparison between Rome and Nola:

O felix Felice tuo tibi praesule Nola,
 inclita ciue sacro, caelesti firma patrono
 postque ipsam titulos Romam sortita secundos,
 quae prius imperio tantum et uictricibus armis,
 30 nunc et apostolicis terrarum est prima sepulchris!

Nola, happy in having your Felix as your protector, you win fame from your saintly citizen and strength from your heavenly patron. You have won the title of city second to Rome herself, which was once first only in dominion and conquering arms, but now first in the world through the apostles' tombs.

753 However, see Hellemo (1989) 90–7 for the problems of reconstructing the two apse mosaics (one of them being the apse mosaic of the Basilica nova) of which we only have Paulinus' accompanying *titulus*.

754 Cf. the translation by Goldschmidt (1940) 39. An alternative translation would be 'the Rock stands on the rock of the Church' as Walsh (1967) has it. Cf. Ambr. hymn 1,15: *hoc ipse petra ecclesiae*, which is said about Peter (cf. 1.6.3 and Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 118). This verse certainly is an intertext for Paulinus here. Paulinus and the Milanese bishop knew each other quite well, see e.g. Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 238–9. Ambrose's hymn does refer to Peter's denial in verse 15, but the central theme of the hymn is the return of light at cockcrow, which is identified with Christ; in Paulinus' *titulus* Christ and Peter are also connected.

755 The authenticity of *ep.* 47 has been doubted but is now generally accepted, see Skeb (1998a) 24.

Carmen 13 is the second *natalicium*, recited probably in 396. One can imagine that Paulinus still felt the need to gain a position in the world of devotion and saints, and exalted Nola for those who came for the first time to the Campanian town and might not yet have been fully aware of its importance.

Rome is praised in a Christianised way: not the victories obtained in pagan times (and claimed as a merit of the pagan gods by some opponents of Christianity) render Rome most important, but the presence of Christian martyrs. Throughout his oeuvre, Paulinus shows a genuine interest in exalting the city of Rome. The theme recurs in the third *natalicium*, c. 14. In a catalogue of people gathering to attend Felix's feast day (vv. 55–79), Paulinus writes: *ipsaque caelestum sacris procerum monumentis / Roma Petro Pauloque potens* (vv. 65–6), 'Rome herself, so powerful through the sacred tombs of the heavenly princes Peter and Paul'.⁷⁵⁶ All other cities are characterised by their military power or fertility, only Rome is accompanied by the names of its most important saints. The word *procere*s for apostles was also in use by Proba (*cento* 589, designating all apostles). In verses 85–8 Paulinus quotes c. 13, 28–30 almost verbatim.⁷⁵⁷ With *duplici . . . honore* (v. 89) and *gemino . . . merito* (vv. 91–2) said about Felix in the following verses, Paulinus seems to strive at compensation for the fact that Rome can present two famous patrons instead of Nola which has only one. Felix was a priest and is now a martyr: therefore, he represents a twofold honour (in a similar way, Peter and Paul could also be said to have obtained a twofold honour to be sure, but it was not in Paulinus' interest to emphasise that).

The designation *procere*s returns in c. 19. Paulinus explains that Christ (*omnimedens dominus*, v. 46) has scattered saints across the world as *medici* (v. 47) in order to heal patients, i.e. people not adhering to the (right) Christian faith (19,50–6):

50 (...) et quosdam licet oppida parua retentent
 martyras, at procere deus ipsos moenibus amplis
 intulit et paucas functos diuisit in oras,
 quos tamen ante obitum toto dedit orbe magistros.

⁷⁵⁶ De Hartel (1999a) 442 signals the similarity with a passage in Prud. *perist.* 11 (189–214), probably written after Paulinus' poem. The last part of verse 208 in this passage is: *iamque Nolanus adest*. This might be a reference to Paulinus' use of the catalogue (which in general of course fits in the epic tradition, cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7,647–817. In *ep.* 13,11 Paulinus calls the San Pietro *amplissimam gloriosi Petri basilicam*.

⁷⁵⁷ De Hartel (1999a) therefore dismisses the passage, but Walsh (1975) 369 (note 15), signals that Paulinus reuses phrases several times and that the passage is probably original. It must be said that a repetition of three lines within 50 verses seems rather awkward.

Inde Petrum et Paulum Romana fixit in urbe,
 55 principibus quoniam medicis caput orbis egebat
 multis insanum uitiiis caecumque tenebris.

Though small towns keep certain martyrs, God sent the outstanding ones to honoured cities, allotting to only a few areas the dead bodies of those whom when living he sent as teachers through the whole world. This is why he put Peter and Paul in Rome, because the capital of the world, lunatic from its many vices and blind in its darkness, needed the leading physicians.

Proceres refers primarily to the apostles here, since these are hinted at by *magistros* in verse 53; *magister* is a term often used for Paul alone in poetry (but cf. *c.* 27,568, 1.12.2.2). He is mentioned in the following verse, with Peter. They are the *principes medici* (cf. Prud. *perist.* 2,460 *apostolorum principes*). The influence of apocryphal stories about the apostles' missionary activities around the world might be expressed in *toto . . . orbe* (v. 53), but this can also refer to Matt 28.16–20.

Paulinus explains why Rome had the right to host two of the most important *magistri*: the city badly needed physicians for its many vices (vv. 55–6). Paulinus cannot present relics of Peter and Paul to the people, they are 'fixed' (*fixit*, v. 54) in Rome, but he does praise Nola and its inhabitants implicitly: they do not need them. Apparently, the situation in Rome is worse than in Nola. This is remarkable since the idea of Rome as a place immersed in vices was already abandoned much earlier; under Constantine's reign (*c.* 19 was written in 405).⁷⁵⁸ The exaltation of Nola is of primary concern here. Paulinus' bad relationship with the Roman clergy may also have found its way into this poem. However, further on in the poem he seems to have changed his mind: he describes how Felix was sent to Nola in order to cure its many vices, since the city was *caecis mixta ruinis / orbis* ('involved in the sightless destruction of the world', vv. 166–7), it lay dying in darkness (*moriens in nocte iacebat*, v. 167) and was 'long corrupted by worshippers of gods of stone' (*saxicolis polluta diu cultoribus*). These are terms similar to the description of Rome in verse 56. In a long passage Paulinus elaborates on Felix's valuable influence in Nola (vv. 164–316). Peter and Paul are the physicians of Rome, Felix of Nola (*Felix* (...) / *Nolanis medicus fuit*, vv. 196–7).⁷⁵⁹ The possession of apostolic relics is

⁷⁵⁸ Cf. Piras (2001), esp. 282: from daughter of Babylon, Rome became the daughter of Sion in Christian imagery.

⁷⁵⁹ In vv. 329–42 Peter and Paul are compared to Timothy and Andrew, the protectors of Constantinople. See 1.11.7.

rare (*paucas in oras*, v. 52), but Nola has some. To be a second Rome, a city needed to be able to show apostle relics.⁷⁶⁰

Felix and Peter and Paul are also mentioned together in c. 21 (*natalicium* 13) which expresses the relief after Stilicho's victory over the Goths at Fiesole in 406.⁷⁶¹ Several saints had invoked Christ (*regem regum*, v. 8) to help the Roman empire: *Felix, qui pacis et ipse patronus / cum patribus Paulo atque Petro et cum fratribus almis / martyribus* (...) ('Felix, who as a patron of peace, together with his fathers Paul and Peter and his brothers the holy martyrs (...)', vv. 6–8).⁷⁶² Peter and Paul are honoured by the term *patres* (and in v. 29 with *proceres*),⁷⁶³ but Felix's significance is emphasised by calling him first and designating him *pacis et ipse patronus*. Felix is one of the saints (v. 34), but the victory at Fiesole is to be granted to them all together, not to one holy man in particular (vv. 25–36).

1.11.7 Andrew

Paulinus is the only poet to mention Andrew more than once, although the popularity of this apostle was widespread, at least in the fifth and sixth centuries.⁷⁶⁴ His relics are referred to in poem 19: according to Paulinus, God made Constantine a Roman emperor to stimulate the circulation of relics (c. 19,317–64), since they were not available in every part of the empire. When the emperor built a new city (Constantinople) to surpass Rome, he also wanted to surpass it in his martyrs and endowed the walls of the new Rome with their relics (vv. 329–41, vv. 334–6 in particular): *his quoque Romuleam sequeretur dotibus urbem / ut sua apostolicis muniret moenia laetus / corporibus*.⁷⁶⁵ Paulinus must apply *apostolicis* . . . *corporibus* to the relics of Timothy, Luke and Andrew

760 Piras (2001) 279.

761 This is the only poem written in several metres (dactylic hexameters, iambic trimeters and elegiac couplets), maybe because of the learned audience present at its recitation. For the audience see Mratschek (2001) 545.

762 These three categories are also mentioned in c. 19,29–34. Cf. 1.10.6 for the position of Paul before Peter. The idea that the choice for *Paulo atque Petro* has to do with the sounding is confirmed by c. 21,29, where Peter is named first, which was more traditional, in the formula: *hic Petrus, hic Paulus proceres*. Cf. also *Petrum Paulumque* in c. 19,340.

763 The association of *pater* with Christian senators in Rome and with the Roman bishop might also be of influence, cf. Blaise s.v.

764 Cf. e.g. Alchermes (1995) 38–9. The other poets to mention Andrew are Juvenius (*evang.* 1,423) and Gregory Nazianzus (1,1,19 2.).

765 'He should likewise emulate Romulus' city with a further endowment in order to happily protect his walls with apostolic bodies.' For the "abundance" of relics in Rome in contrast with the "vacuum of holiness" in Constantinople, see Lønstrup (2010) 63–72.

here, which were transported to Constantinople in 356 and 357 respectively, when Constantius (not Constantine) was emperor.⁷⁶⁶ These are the dates that have been generally accepted for a long time. Richard W. Burgess has argued for a new date of the translation of Andrew's relics during Constantine's reign (without considering Paulinus as a significant witness).⁷⁶⁷ If Burgess is right, Paulinus was well informed, but this is probably not the result of a thorough investigation of the historical circumstances of the translation. Given Paulinus' restricted interest in historical accuracy, he might have stumbled upon a source which offered the right information coincidentally. In any case, it was much more interesting for Paulinus to have the name of Constantine—the first Christian emperor—linked to Andrew's relics than that of Constantius.⁷⁶⁸

It does not seem to be a coincidence that Paulinus uses the word *dotes* to indicate the two saints. Prudentius used this word to denote Peter and Paul, described as gifts to Rome in *perist.* 12,55 (see 1.10.6). For Paulinus, Constantinople is rivalling the great city of Rome: *Constantinopolis, magnae caput aemula Romae* (v. 338).⁷⁶⁹ He links Constantine's status to the presence of the relics in the Eastern capital and makes the comparison with Peter and Paul (vv. 337–42) explicit. He also notes in this context that Timothy was Paul's disciple and Andrew the brother of Peter (vv. 341–2), which is in accordance with the information in the gospels of the Biblical canon. They are said to derive their power and allure from the fact that they knew the two most important apostles and were in close contact with them. Paulinus does not mention the legend that Andrew founded the episcopal see of Constantinople, but this tale was also absent in the works of contemporary Greek writers.⁷⁷⁰

766 For the dates see e.g. Delehaye (1933) 54–5. Piras (2001) 279 suggests that Paulinus refers to the intentions of Constantine.

767 Burgess (2003) 28. Bardill (2012) 369 agrees with the new date and links it to Constantine's mausoleum in Constantinople: the translation is another confirmation of Constantine's interest in the relics of the apostles in his view. However, Wortley (2005) 214–220 dates the translation to Constantius' reign.

768 Cf. Dijkstra (2012) 204–7. The only other occasion on which Paulinus mentions Constantine is *ep.* 31,4 (with focus on Helena).

769 Paulinus alludes to Claudian's invective *In Rufinum* 2,54: *Urbs etiam, magnae qui dicitur aemula Romae* (said about Constantinople). *In Rufinum* 2 was written in 397, see Cameron (1970) 76–87.

770 See Dvornik (1958) 149–50 for Paulinus and Andrew, pp. 138–56 for Andrew in non apocryphal literature until the fifth century. For the cult of Peter and Paul in Constantinople in the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century see Lønstrup Dal Santo (2015) and id. (2012).

Paulinus continues by referring to the many miracles that the relics of Andrew and Timothy performed on their way to Constantinople (vv. 342–52), without going into details. Their relics were divided and scattered across the world (vv. 353–62) and had also arrived in Nola (vv. 363–77): *nam hoc quoque sumpsimus istic, / carnis apostolicae sacra pignora puluere paruo* ('for we have received this too, in the form of a fragment of dust, the sacred tokens of the apostles' flesh') in verses 364–5, seems to refer to all the relics that were to be found in Nola and Fundi.⁷⁷¹ Paulinus does not seem to restrict the meaning of *apostolica* to 'apostolic' *stricto sensu* in this passage.⁷⁷² Thereafter, Paulinus recounts the working of the relics in Nola at length (vv. 364–715). The relics were preserved in the newer basilica, with which the fifth basilica in Nola is meant, devoted to Felix, but protected by the apostolic relics (vv. 369–71): (sc.: *aedes*) *quae reliquis eius aetate recentior aulis / exiguos cineres et magnos seruat honores / seruaturque magis custodibus ipsa patronis* 'This church, which is newer than the others, preserves the great distinction of these tiny ashes, and is itself more securely preserved by its patron guardians.'⁷⁷³

Paulinus refers to the relics in the altar of the Basilica nova in a *titulus* (ep. 32,11), which was written beneath the apse mosaic (described in ep. 32,10, see 1.11.5). This *titulus* ends (vv. 7–10):

Sancta Deo geminum uelant altaria honorem,
 cum cruce apostolicos quae sociant cineres.
 Quam bene iunguntur ligno crucis ossa piorum,
 Pro cruce ut occisis in cruce sit requies.

771 For the spread of relics of the apostles in Italy, see Borella (1967) 219. The relics of Thomas were in Nola, those of Andrew and Luke in Nola and Fundi.

772 Cf. c. 27,440–8, where Paulinus explains that the saints' power is also extended to regions where their relics are not present. The virtue of the saints (*sanctorum uirtus*) is said to evoke even in its tiniest part the power of the apostolic body (*apostolici uim corporis*): this body seems to refer to the saints (including the apostles) and not specifically to the apostles (cf. Blaise, s.v. 2): *magna et in exiguo sanctorum puluere uirtus / clamat apostolici uim corporis indice uerbo* (vv. 447–8). The same seems to be at stake in a poetic *titulus* in ep. 32,8 2 (*apostolicis . . . corporibus*). An example of a passage in which Paulinus does make a difference between martyrs and apostles is ep. 32,10.

773 See Walsh (1975) 382–3 (notes 65–7). In c. 28 (10th *natalicium*), Paulinus recounts a miracle of Felix who safeguarded the Nolan complex from a great fire (which fortunately did burn down two huts which blocked the view of Paulinus' basilica) in verses 60–166. When the fire was discovered, Paulinus and other people went to the Basilica apostolorum and asked a solution from the apostolic relics there (*atque ab apostolici cineris uirtute medellam / poscimus*, vv. 113–4). However, it was a relic of Jesus' cross that stopped the fire.

The holy altar conceals a twofold honour to God, for it combines the cross and ashes of the apostles. How right it is that the bones of holy men lie with the wood of the cross, so that there is rest on the cross for those who died for the cross.

As mentioned above, the relics in the altar (Paulinus uses a poetic plural here) consisted of martyrs and apostles (and fragments of the cross). It is doubtful whether Paulinus uses *apostolicos* here in a narrow or broad sense, but his choice for the word *apostolicos* seems to emphasise the fact that he also possessed relics from the followers of Christ, directly connected with his Passion.⁷⁷⁴ Moreover, Andrew, praised in c. 19 as well as in 27, allegedly died on the cross, which might have played a role too (note the wordplay on *cruce* in v. 10). Paulinus does not mention which relics are meant. Presumably Severus was already well informed about them.⁷⁷⁵ *Pius* is a standard compliment for martyrs in general and means the same as *sanctus*.⁷⁷⁶ The *titulus* belonging to the apse mosaic of the church in Fundi (*ep.* 32,17) shows several similarities with that of Nola. Paulinus also mentions the *titulus* describing the altar and its relics (*ibid.*): he speaks about the *apostolicas . . . uires* (*ep.* 32,17 15) present in the altar, with relics of Andrew, Luke, Nazarius, Protase and Gervase. *Apostolicus* seems again to be used in a broad sense here, referring to all martyrs whose relics could be found under the altar.

In *carmen* 27 Paulinus guides Nicetas through the newly built complex (vv. 315–541) and also refers to the relics stored in the altar of the *Basilica nova*, including *apostolici cineres* (v. 403).⁷⁷⁷ He then devotes five verses to Andrew (vv. 406–10), four to John the Baptist (vv. 411–4), nine to Thomas (vv. 415–23) and four to Luke (vv. 424–7). In verses 428–39 some non-Biblical saints are enumerated (Agricola, Vitalis, Proculus, Euphemia, Nazarius).⁷⁷⁸ About Andrew, Paulinus wrote:

774 Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 126, Lehmann (2004) 161 and Goldschmidt (1940) 41 translate ‘apostolic’ in their respective languages. Walsh (1967) 147 translates ‘martyrs’. None of the commentaries explains the term.

775 Lehmann (2004) 168.

776 Goldschmidt (1940) 105.

777 It is not clear whether Paulinus speaks about the relics in the *Basilica vetus* or *Basilica nova*, cf. Lehmann (2004) 208: he seems to be right in dismissing the idea that the relics of the apostles were concealed in the *Basilica nova* only because of *apostolicos cineres* in *ep.* 32,11, since the term *apostolicus* is also used in a broader sense, cf. 1.11.1. Guttilla (1995) 80 assumes that it refers to the apostles alone, by analogy with c. 28,113 (*apostolici cineris uirtute*), for which see note 773.

778 The relics of the saints mentioned by Paulinus were relatively widespread in his days, see Lehmann (2004) 208 (note 393) and Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard (2006) 285 (note 149).

Hic pater Andreas, hic qui piscator ad Argos
 missus uaniloquas docuit mutescere linguas;
 qui postquam populos ruptis erroris iniqui
 retibus explicuit traxitque ad retia Christi,
 410 Thessalicos fuso damnauit sanguine Patras.

Here is father Andrew, the fisherman sent to Argos who there taught vain-sounding tongues to observe silence; Andrew, who broke the net of wicked error to extricate the people from it and to draw them to Christ's net, and who later by shedding his blood brought condemnation on Thessalian Patras.

The beginning of the passage (*hic pater Andreas*) is the same as the beginning of verse 17 of the apse *titulus* in Paulinus' letter 32,17, where he is named with Luke.⁷⁷⁹ He is called a fisherman. The phrasing *pater Andreas* reminds of the common Vergilian designation of Aeneas and contributes to Andrew's status.⁷⁸⁰ Like the other apostles, Andrew held his metier before his vocation: however, the specific vocation of Peter and Andrew might have influenced Paulinus' choice as a designation of Andrew in particular ('"Come, follow me", Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people"'). The same passage probably explains verses 408–9.⁷⁸¹ The idea that Andrew was sent to Greece might have been influenced by John 12.20–2.⁷⁸² According to the apocryphal acts of Andrew, which have partly been preserved, Andrew died in Patras, which is not in Thessalia.⁷⁸³ Paulinus also refers to Patras in c. 19,78 and to Andrew's relics in

779 Cf. Guttilla (1995) 64 on this passage.

780 Vergil's frequently (17 times) used the phrase *pater Aeneas*, always after the first word of the verse. Cf. e.g. *Aen.* 12,166 (*hinc pater Aeneas, Romanae stirpis origo*), in which a topographical indication follows, as is the case in Paulinus' passage. Paulinus calling Andrew *pater*—unique among his designations for the apostles—might be due to the similarity of sound between the names *Andreas* and *Aeneas*.

781 For a reference to the fisherman metaphor applied to Paulinus himself, see *ep.* 5,6. Cf. *ep.* 20,6 to Delphinus, the bishop of his birthplace Bordeaux (cf. Trout (1999) 31): *Meminerimus te non solum patrem sed et Petrum nobis esse factum, quia tu misisti hamum ad me de profundis et amaris huius saeculi fluctibus extrahendum* (...).

782 John 12.20–2: 'Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. 21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." 22 Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.' See Klijn (2006) 231; cf. Burnet (2014) 263–5.

783 Walsh (1975) 407–8 (note 48) therefore assumes that Paulinus never went to the city himself. Note the word *damnare* in 410: in most cases, a city is exalted because of the fact that a martyr died there. Maybe Paulinus used the term to make clear that Andrew's martyr-

Greece in c. 19,336. John and Andrew are designated as *lumina tanta* (c. 19,80) enlightening the *graues . . . tenebras* of the world. In this passage (c. 19,76–80) Andrew is the symbol of saints sent to Europe and John of those sent to Asia. Thereafter (vv. 81–4), several saints are mentioned with their specific places of worship in both parts of the world. The passage does not seem to refer to any other specific story about Andrew, but rather to hint at the many conversions by Andrew and his acts of exorcism.⁷⁸⁴

1.11.8 *Thomas*

The apostle Thomas is mentioned five times by Paulinus, including once with his Greek name Didymus (a translation of the Aramaic Thomas already provided by John (John 11.16; 20.24)).⁷⁸⁵

- 415 Hic dubius gemino Didymus cognomine Thomas
 adiacet; hunc Christus pauidae cunctamine mentis
 pro nostra dubitare fide permisit, ut et nos
 hoc duce firmati dominumque deumque trementes
 uiuere post mortem uero fateamur Iesum
 420 corpore, uiua suae monstrantem uulnera carnis,
 ut ueniente die, qua iam manifestus aperta
 luce deus ueniet, cruciata in carne coruscum
 agnoscant trepidi quem confixere rebelles.

Here lies doubting Thomas Didymus, with the double surname; Christ allowed him to be hesitant and uncertain in fearful mind for our faith's sake, so that we, too, strengthened by his example, can fear our Lord and God and confess that Jesus physically lives on after death and demonstrates the living wounds in his flesh. So, when the day comes on which God will come recognisable in the open light of day, those who took up arms against him will tremblingly identify the one they nailed to the cross now shining in his crucified body. (c. 27,415–23)

dom did not lead to a veneration of the apostle. However, given the mistake about Patras, there cannot be deduced too much from Paulinus' account: maybe there was a cult that Paulinus did not know.

784 See Prieur and Schneemelcher (1999 (1997)) 109–37 for the different stories about Andrew in apocryphal literature.

785 Before Paulinus, Juvenius was the only poet to use the name Didymus to indicate Thomas (*evang.* 4,330, see 1.2.3.3). After him in poetry until the sixth century the name is only found in Sedulius' *Carmen Paschale* 5,379 and Arator's *De actibus apostolorum* 1,539.

The same story (John 20.24–9) is also told in a more elaborate way in c. 31, 149–216.⁷⁸⁶ In c. 27 Paulinus presents the relics of Nola to his visitor Nicetas (vv. 315–541), in c. 31 the story is part of Paulinus' consolation of two parents who lost a young child. Logically, the idea of life after death should comfort them. Paulinus tries to strengthen their belief in an afterlife for their child. In this context, the name Didymus for Thomas is completely irrelevant, and therefore left out. In c. 27 it is mentioned: however, Didymus is not a surname, but the translation of the name Thomas into Greek. Maybe Paulinus intended word-play between *dubius* and *gemina*.⁷⁸⁷ The poet elaborates on Thomas' doubts about Jesus' Resurrection. He does not deny Thomas' incredulity (*dubius* in v. 415; *cunctamine* in v. 416, cf. Commodianus' *Carmen* 561: *Thomam incredulum illum*, 1.1.1), but explains it as a Biblical *exemplum* for Christians of his own day, deliberately allowed by Christ himself (*hoc duce*, v. 418). Moreover, Thomas acted out of fear (*pauidae cunctamine mentis*, v. 416). This positive explanation for Thomas' behaviour in the Biblical account was not unusual: Ambrose, among others, saw the story as enrichment for its readers.⁷⁸⁸ It is in accordance with Paulinus' general ideas about the saints interfering on behalf of human beings. Thomas in this way is presented as teaching Christians living after him (cf. *permisit*, v. 417, and *hoc duce firmati*, v. 418) about the nature of Christ. In c. 31, 151–4 the use of the first person singular makes Paulinus himself felt even more present than the use of the first person plural does in c. 27:

Firmauit dubitando fidem; dum comminus anceps
 arguitur Thomas, omnis homo instruitur.
 Cernere quod Thomas coram et palpare iubetur,
 constanter stabili credere disco fide

By his doubting, he strengthened faith. When the doubting Thomas was refuted face-to-face, all mankind was given instruction. Because Thomas was bid-

⁷⁸⁶ Paulinus also refers to it in *ep.* 13,25 and 31,6. Thomas is introduced in c. 31 by the word *apostolus* (v. 149), most often used for Paul. However, there was but one doubting apostle: every person in the audience would immediately understand whom the story was about. Thomas is called by his name in vv. 152 and 153.

⁷⁸⁷ Goldschmidt (1940) 142 suggests that *dubius* also refers to Thomas' double, ambiguous name.

⁷⁸⁸ Ambr. *In Lucam* 10,168; cf. Paulinus' *ep.* 31,6: (...) *nec ipsi tamen de resurrectione carnis potius quam de resurrectionis qualitate dubitantes* (...), said about all the apostles (cited after De Hartel (1999b)).

den to see and feel in person, I learn to believe unswervingly and with steady faith (...).⁷⁸⁹

The story of Thomas included elements of the heated discussions about the nature of Christ which were abundant in Paulinus' time.⁷⁹⁰ The poet remains more faithful to the text than many of his contemporaries: he does not suggest that Thomas actually touched Jesus. This act is not found in the Biblical account, but has been interpreted from the story almost without questioning from early Christianity onwards until the Reformation, for instance by Ambrose.⁷⁹¹

In c. 19 Thomas' missionary work is referred to with the simple phrase (...) *conplectitur India Thomam* (v. 81). Although traditions differed on the region where Thomas performed his missionary work, a small tradition represented by the apocryphal Acts of Thomas claimed that it was India. Paulinus received many visitors in Nola and heard this tradition from some of them. It is unlikely that he read the Acts himself, since they were mainly read in the East.⁷⁹²

1.11.9 *John*

The apostle John has already been mentioned in the sections on Paul and on Peter (1.11.4; 5). John was said to have chased Diana out of Ephesus (*fugit et ex Epheso trudente Diana Iohanne*, c. 19,95), the city to which God had donated his relics (c. 19,78).⁷⁹³ This story is described in the *Acta Iohannis* (37–45).⁷⁹⁴

789 Cf. 1.11.2.

790 Cf. *uero* ... / *corpore uiua* ... *uulnera*, vv. 27,419–20, with *corpore* and *uiua* placed emphatically next to each other. These lines are exactly in the middle of the passage about Thomas. For theological implications of the story of Thomas, see Most (2005) 122–39.

791 See Most (2005) 3–154, in particular 141–5 for the exegetical tradition regarding the story of doubting Thomas in late antiquity.

792 Another tradition had it that Thomas went to Parthia, see e.g. Eusebius, *h.e.* 3,1. Thomas' relics were transported from India to Edessa (Parthia), according to (e.g.) *Peregrinatio Egeriae* 17 and Greg. Naz. *Or.* 33 (Πρὸς Ἀρειανούς, καὶ εἰς ἑαυτόν), 11. On the traditions of the apostle-founder of the Christian community in India see especially Dihle (1998). Cf. Most (2005) 99–100 on Thomas in particular.

793 For John presented as a symbol of God's gifts to Asia cf. 1.11.7.

794 These apocryphal acts seem to appear in the Latin speaking West at the end of the fourth century and parts of it were apparently circulating in Aquitania, see Schäferdiek and Uiginn (1999 (1997)) 141–2. Since this was Paulinus' region of birth and c. 19 was written in the same period (405), Paulinus might have read the acts in Latin. Paulinus' contacts all came from the Western part of the empire, see Mratschek (2001) (esp. p. 517). His conception of art shows an Eastern preference for symbolism over realism, however, according to Bijvanck (1929) 781. Paulinus was not able to read Greek according to himself (see

John's prayer is answered and the temple of Diana partly collapses. Her worshippers are convinced of God's existence and demolish the rest of the temple.

Once, John is mentioned as evangelist and teacher (*docet... Iohannes*, c. 22,53), before a quotation of John 1.1. Although John is referred to as the apostle resting on Jesus' breast (and partaking in his knowledge) in Paulinus' letters, this is never mentioned in his poetry.⁷⁹⁵

1.11.10 *The Other Apostles*

As mentioned above, *carmen* 19 mentions several Christian saints whose relics were scattered across the world by God (vv. 76–84). Three apostles mentioned here do not appear elsewhere in Paulinus' poetry: Lebbaeus, Matthew and Philip (c. 19,81–3):

Parthia Matthaëum conplectitur, India Thomam,
Lebbaëum Libyes, Phryges acceperere Philippum,
Creta Titum sumpsit, medicum Boeotia Lucam.

Parthia embraces Matthew, India Thomas; the Africans obtained Thaddaeus and the Phrygians Philip; Crete adopted Titius and Boeotia the physician Luke.

Lebbaeus (the Latin name of Thaddeus, he is also called Jude) is mentioned for the first time in poetry, but nothing has been added except the country where his relics were stored. Probably Paulinus knew hardly more about this apostle: "En effet, de tous les apôtres, Jude est certainement le plus mystérieux, celui qui échappe le plus à l'investigation. On ne peut même pas dire qu'il n'est qu'un nom, ce serait déjà trop précis: entre Jude, Thaddée, Lebbaeus, personne ne sait même comment se nommait cet apôtre."⁷⁹⁶ The apocryphal stories about Lebbaeus are presumably written after the fourth century. Although the origin of the stories about the apostle may well be older and Paulinus might have known those stories, Walsh's suggestion that Libya is connected to Lebbaeus because of lexical similarity seems to be right: in the acts of Lebbaeus his missionary work is located in the East (Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia).⁷⁹⁷

ep. 46,2 pointed at by Mratschek (2001), 543) but this might have been feigned modesty since he seems to have followed the Septuagint instead of the Vulgate, see Walsh (1975) 406–7 (notes 33–4) on *septem* (c. 27,264) and *storacis* (c. 27,276).

795 See *ep.* 21. Cf. Ambrose on John, 1.6.4. The gospel story of John and Mary addressed by Jesus at the cross is mentioned in *ep.* 50,17.

796 Burnet (2014) 617.

797 Walsh (1975) 378 (note 14). Regarding Lebbaeus and the apocrypha, De Santos Otero (1999⁶) 436–8 mentions *Acta Thaddaei* in Coptic and in Greek and a *Passio Simonis et*

Apart from Gregory's 1.1,19, Philip was only mentioned by Juvenecus in his versification of the vocation of Nathanael (*evang.* 2,99–126, 1.2.3.3) and by Prudentius in *apoth.* 981 (for which see 1.10.8), both without focus on Philip however (but on Nathanael and Christ respectively). The legend about his sojourn in Phrygia was an old one—attested already in the second century—, and widespread.⁷⁹⁸

Matthew is also rarely found: positively described in Juvenecus' *evang.* 2,96 (1.2.3.3), impartially in Prudentius' *apoth.* 981 and Gregory's poem 1.1,19). Different regions are considered as his missionary areas, e.g. Scythia and Media.⁷⁹⁹

1.11.11 Concluding Remarks

Paulinus added a personal touch to his poetry to an extent that was without precedent in early Christian poetry. The most important part of his poetry consists of the *natalicia*, read out aloud by its author at the feast day of Felix. These poems were probably intended to reach a broad audience. Paulinus' particular concern for the veneration of Felix—for whom he also erected his monastic complex decorated with images and *tituli*—partly explains the relatively less significant place of the apostles in Paulinus' poetry.

In his description of the apostles, Paulinus shows the usual interest in Peter and Paul (although with less emphasis on the unity between them) and the city of Rome. Unusual is his reference to several apocryphal traditions, especially about the missionary regions of some of the apostles. Paulinus' complex stored relics of Andrew and Thomas: this might explain the attention paid to them, although one would have expected more in his rich oeuvre. The story of Thomas' incredulity is told twice by Paulinus (c. 27,415–23 and c. 31,149–216). Thomas is presented as a Biblical *exemplum*, showing that Jesus had really resurrected in order that people who lived afterwards would believe it. More often than the other apostles, Paul is mentioned alone. Paulinus also mentions

Iudae in Latin. In Gregory's hexametrical apostle list, Thaddeus is mentioned by his other designation Judas. No confusion can arouse, however, since Judas Iscariot is called οὐ φάρτος ἄλλος ('the ineffable other' in 1.1,19 5, see 1.9.5).

798 See De Santos Otero (1999⁶) 424–32, esp. 426. He mentions *Acta Philippi* (pp. 424–9) in Greek, a *Historia Philippi* in Syriac (p. 429–30) and *Acta Philippi et Petri* in Coptic (pp. 430–2).

799 See De Santos Otero (1999⁶) 400 (Scythia) and 401 (Media) about the *Acta Andreae et Matthiae apud anthropofagos* in Greek (pp. 399–403). Matthias and Matthew are often confused. De Santos Otero also mentions a *Martyrium Matthaei* (pp. 414–5) in Greek (a Latin version is also extant), which is partly based on the former *Acta*, and the *Passio Matthaei* (pp. 415–6) of Pseudo-Abdias, in Latin, according to which Matthew went to Ethiopia.

Lebbaeus, Philip, John and Matthew. The poet does not go into details in any of these passages. He might have known their apocryphal traditions only superficially. No poetry of the period when Paulinus had been appointed a bishop and had become more involved in ecclesiastical matters, has survived the ravages of time.

Paulinus introduced some new notions about the twelve in Latin poetry. They are presented as doctors (c. 19,35–8), curing the people with the Christian dogma. They are often only used to contribute to the status of Felix or Nola. Similarly, the apostles are sometimes equalled to prophets or patriarchs in order to stress the *concordia* between the two Testaments (cf. e.g. c. 15,355–7; c. 26,283–5; c. 27,209–12), in order to enlarge the prestige of the Nolan complex, consisting of older, pre-Paulinian, elements (especially the Basilica vetus) and the ones constructed at the expenses of Paulinus (Basilica nova). In c. 21,6–8, Peter, Paul and Felix are invoked together as protectors of the Roman Empire.

Two stories about Paul are particularly interesting. Paulinus is the only poet to use the story about Paul driving out an evil spirit from a young slave (Acts 16.16–8, see c. 19,96–7). It is the only Biblical story about Paul to which he refers and one of the few stories of Paul performing miracles. Another miracle that is mentioned by Paulinus is without precedent, since it seems to be a local legend: it recounts the shipwreck and subsequent rescue of Martinianus (c. 24,263–98). He finds himself on dry land with Paul's letters on his chest. Paulinus' story testifies to the salvaging power of Scripture, but also to that of texts in general, which again contributes to the significance and relevance of Paulinus' own poetry about Felix.

Peter is compared to Felix in c. 15,260–5 and c. 20,241–51: the apostle is particularly praised in these passages (c. 15,262: *bisseno sublimis in agmine discipulorum*), which adds to the praise for Felix. In both passages Paulinus also mentions a miracle described in the Bible: Peter's release from prison (Acts 12.6–11) and his healing at the *Porta speciosa* (Acts 3.1–10), which was already mentioned by Prudentius (*ditt.* 45,181–4). Paulinus relates Peter's walking on the waves to Moses' splitting of the sea (c. 26,374–8). This reminds of the scenes of the water miracle of Moses (in the catacombs) and Peter (on sarcophagi) in art.

Direct discourse is never used by Paulinus when he mentions the apostles: he does not even pretend to change the point of view in his poems, which is always his own. This contributes to the distance by which Paulinus characterises the relationship between men and the apostles in his writings. The apostles can function as powerful saints, who protect humans against barbarians, storms and other calamities, but the relationship never seems to become very personal. Moreover, the apostles share their capacities with other saints.

Paulinus is proud to have apostolic relics because they are held in high esteem, but personally he considers Felix to be much more important.

1.12 The *Oratio consulis Ausonii versibus rhopalicis*

The so-called *Oratio consulis Ausonii versibus rhopalicis* has been rejected as a genuine work of Ausonius by Green in his most recent edition of the poet's oeuvre.⁸⁰⁰ Given the characteristics of its language (which contains many Christianised words), the rejection of Ausonius' authorship seems justified, although the poem has been transmitted in the oldest manuscript containing Ausonius' poetry.⁸⁰¹ The *oratio* is written in rhopalic hexameters, which means that every verse consists of five words containing one to five syllables each.⁸⁰² Ausonius never mentioned the apostles in his work, but in this pseudo-Ausonian poem Peter and Paul are mentioned in a significant way. The poem is a prayer in verses: it starts with an invocation of the Holy Trinity (vv. 1–15). God is invoked first (vv. 1–3 *sic*), his Son second (again in three verses, vv. 4–6) and then the Paraclete (vv. 7–9). Next, the salvation is mentioned which is brought by baptism and the Crucifixion (vv. 16–26). Some of Jesus' miracles are praised in vv. 27–38. The prayer closes in vv. 39–42. The poem seems to be a poetic summary of the Christian faith.⁸⁰³

The last but one passage mentions Stephen, Peter and Paul:

Dans aulam Stephano pretiosam dilapidato,
dans clauas superas cathedrali incohatori,
quin Paulum infestum copularis agglomeratu.

800 The poem's authenticity as a work of Ausonius had already been doubted before, see Green (1991) 667–9 for a short discussion and the text of the poem. The poem is also included in LCL 96.

801 Ms. V, written around 800. See Green (1991) xli–xlix for the manuscript tradition of Ausonius' work.

802 For an analysis of the metre of the poem, see especially Martin (1972) 506–7.

803 See Martin (1972) 511: "(...) elle constitue un petit cours complet d'instruction religieuse, exposant en quarante-deux vers l'essentiel de la foi chrétienne (...)." The author is "un prêtre, peut-on avancer avec une quasi-certitude", *ibid.* Martin suggests that the author knew Ausonius and addressed him through this poem written in his name (see pp. 509 and 511–2). However, since there is no evidence for this original suggestion, it seems more safely to assume that the poem was transmitted anonymously and has been ascribed to Ausonius, who was a highly praised author from the same period in which the poem was probably written.

Fit doctor populi lapidantum constimulator,
 35 ut latro confessor paradisum participavit.
 Sic, credo, adnectens durissima clarificandis
 nos seros famulos accrescere perpetieris
 sub tali edoctos antistite religionis.

You (sc. Christ) gave a precious hall to lapidated Stephen, you gave the supreme keys to the episcopal founder, you even bound hostile Paul to the flock. He became a teacher of the people, the co-instigator of the people who lapidated, just as a thief entered paradise as confessor. In this way, I believe, tying very hard things with laudable matters, you will bear us, late servants, to grow, (we who are) educated by such a master of religion.⁸⁰⁴

The addressee of this passage must be Christ, invoked in the first and last verse (*spes deus*), but also in verse 4 (*Christe*). The singularity of the Latin used in this poem, is in this passage illustrated by rare words such as *incohator* and *constimulator*.⁸⁰⁵

The first word must refer to Peter to whom the keys of heaven were entrusted (Matt 16.19). Whereas Damasus and Prudentius referred to the doors of heaven (*ep.* 4.2, see 1.5.3, and *perist.* 2.464, see 1.13.5), the author of the *oratio* mentions the keys from the Biblical account, maybe influenced by depictions of the *Traditio clavium* (see 2.1.3.1.1). The phrase *cathedrali incohatori* is a remarkably direct allusion to the tradition of the Roman bishop legitimising his position by reference to his succession of the apostle Peter as a bishop. The verse resembles Prudentius' *perist.* 2.462 (*alter, cathedram possidens primam*) about Peter.

Doctor populi in verse 34 has been said to correspond to *uocator gentium*, said about Paul in *perist.* 2.461, but these words rather seem to refer to general notions of Paul as *magister* or *doctor* of the heathens, since there is no formal correspondence between the designations.⁸⁰⁶ At the same time, the phrase fits the other examples in vv. 31–5, since they all include a heavenly space. During

804 The translations in this section are my own.

805 The form *incohator* (v. 32) is used for the first time by Prudentius (*Ham. Praef.* 27, to describe Cain). Spelled as *inchoator*, it is found 12 times in Brepols' *Library of Latin Texts Series A & B*. The same databases attest the word *constimulator* only in the above mentioned passage. Nevertheless, it is not mentioned in an analysis of the language of the poem in Mohrmann (1927/1928) 387–91.

806 The link between *perist.* 2 and the rhopalic poem was made by Ruyschaert (1968) 285 (note 62), who assumed, however, that the poem was written by Ausonius, some decades before the *Peristephanon*.

Stephen's lapidation (Acts 7.54–60, referred to again in v. 34), the martyr saw a heavenly space (Acts 7.55–6), called *aula* in v. 31. The comparison of heaven and the imperial court was not unusual in the fourth century. Thereafter, the entry of heaven (referred to by its keys in v. 32) and Paul's vision of heaven (2 Cor 12.2–4, which seems to be alluded to v. 35) are described. This vision was already mentioned by Damasus in *ep.* 1, although Paul does not write that he himself experienced it. The emphasis is on Paul's conversion, from *infestus* (v. 33) to *doctor populi* (v. 34), culminating in his vision of heaven.⁸⁰⁷

More positive connotations for Paul in the poem are *doctor populi* (v. 34), but also *antistes* ('bishop', v. 38), with emphasis (cf. *tali*, v. 38).⁸⁰⁸ Peter and Paul are thus both linked with the episcopacy. This might suggest a Roman provenance of the poem, although Rome was of course exalted also in non-Roman poetry (cf. e.g. Ambrose). The glory for Peter and Paul (and Stephen) is enforced by the fact that only angels could tell the miracles described (vv. 27–30). The designation *latro* (v. 35) fits these ideas and might also be a reference to the criminal (*latro*) who confessed at the cross (Luke 23.40–3).⁸⁰⁹

1.12.1 *Concluding Remarks*

The *Oratio consulis Ausonii versibus rhopalicis* invokes the Holy Trinity and pays attention to three Biblical characters only: Stephen, Peter and Paul. Stephen, the very first Christian martyr, is mentioned first. Peter and Paul, his most famous successors as martyrs of the Christian faith, follow. Paul was involved in Stephen's lapidation (v. 34, cf. Acts 7.58). The apostle is presented as a sinner who converted to Christianity: maybe Paul is used as an example for the treatment coveted by whoever used the prayer. With an original wording (*cathedrali incohator*, v. 32), Peter is very explicitly linked to the episcopate, which seems to confirm the dating around the year 400. Paul's conversion and vision of paradise are mentioned, which are recurrent themes in early Christian poetry.

807 This description of a vision of paradise in the Bible probably also was a point of departure for the origin of some apocryphal apocalypses of Paul, see Funk (1999) and Duensing & De Santos Otero (1999). The apocalypse mentioned by Duensing & De Santos Otero (1999) was popular and widespread and might have contributed to the choice of the poet of the *Oratio* to include this miracle in his poem.

808 Mohrmann (1927/1928) 386 interprets the poem as the prayer of someone preparing for baptism, educated by a bishop. However, it seems to me that the verse should be interpreted in direct connection with the preceding verses.

809 Cf. Augustine, *De natura et origine animae* 1,9,11: *Unde et latro ille, non ante crucem Domini sectator, sed in cruce confessor* (...).

1.13 Synthesis: The Apostles in Early Christian Poetry

The representation of the apostles in early Christian poetry from its beginnings to its 'Golden Age' around the year 400 reflects several broader developments in the culture of the Roman Empire in that period. Two tendencies appear in virtually all poems: first, the concern for a collective identity of all members of the general Church and its internal unity. This concern is communicated via the apostolic representation in the form of the *concordia duodecim* (scil. *discipulorum*) and the *concordia apostolorum*.⁸¹⁰ Second, Peter is exalted. He is often presented as the forerunner of the (Roman) bishops.

In the fourth century, Christianity became the leading religion in the Roman Empire: the cult of the saints definitively arose, the Roman bishops started to zealously promote their particular position and Christian poetry and art definitively broke through. All these aspects are reflected in the poetry of the period and more particularly in the representation of the apostles.

Most poets were clergymen, who used poetry to create a positive memory of the early Church adapted to the needs of the fourth century. Only two small traces of another, more critical, tradition remain, in the oeuvres of Claudian and Palladas. The poetry was often directed towards an elite audience, but in some cases—like Ambrose—it functioned also as a means of mass communication. Although the apostles had a rather modest role in early Christian poetry, they were mentioned in a variety of genres and by many different authors.

1.13.1 *The Poets and Their Tradition*

Early Christian poetry in general is characterised by a profound influence of classical literature. Apart from Commodianus, the very first beginnings of a poetical tradition—the works by Juvencus and Proba—were already marked by the ambition to rewrite Vergil and adapt the epic tradition to Christian preferences. Early Christian poets needed to follow the literary tradition in order to be understood and appreciated by their audience, which was unaccustomed to Christian literature written according to the highest literary standards. Moreover, poetry was the most prominent literary form through which *paideia* was expressed. At the same time, the condemnation of classical literature is a topos in the work of nearly all Christian poets, since they also wanted to underline the innovative nature of their work.

The literary tradition triggered Christian poets to compare important Christian figures to pagan heroes, e.g. the pagan ancestor of the Romans:

810 The first term is my own, the second one has been used e.g. by Huskinson (1982) and Pietri (1976), pp. 1571–96 in particular. Cf. Dijkstra (2015).

Aeneas. Juvencus and Proba put Jesus on a par with Aeneas, via intertextual references, Paulinus refers to him in his designation for Andrew and Prudentius links the Trojan hero to Peter in his *c. Symm. praef.* 1. Despite the diversity of these comparisons, all poets used them for the same purpose: they connected the highly esteemed, mythic past of the Roman Empire with the beginnings of Christian history (cf. also 1.13.4).

Besides the concern for tradition and learning, another current in early Christian poetry was its didacticism. The poetical value of the poems of Gregory and Amphilocheus in particular seems limited. They probably wrote mainly to instruct catechumens and young people.⁸¹¹ The metre primarily functioned as a mnemonic device. Gregory and Amphilocheus are the only representatives of the Greek poetry of the fourth century who mention the apostles. This is a remarkable contrast to the West, where Christian poetry flourished at the same time, both in quantity and in quality of the work.⁸¹² It seems that the idea of a utilitarian value of poetry was so predominant in the East, that a full Christian poetical tradition could not yet be established. But didactic elements are also part of Latin poetry, e.g. in the poetry of Paulinus.

It seems probable that most poets knew their predecessors. Commodianus is the odd man out, but after him a Christian poetical tradition emerged. It is improbable that Proba wrote her cento without knowing that Juvencus had done something less audacious, but similar in many ways, before. The influence of Hilary can be found in Ambrose's hymns. Ambrose and Damasus certainly knew each other, and Prudentius might have known them too. Gregory and Amphilocheus were relatives. Claudian knew at least some Christian poetry and was read by Prudentius.

Within this diversity of writers and genres, some remarkably consistent tendencies in the description of the apostles can be detected. I will first discuss the frequency of occurrence of the various apostles as well as the apostles as a group in poetry, including an investigation of the topics that occur in references to the apostles (1.13.3–17). Thereafter, the degree of apocryphal and canonical influence in the poetical representation of the apostles is discussed (1.13.18). The following step will be to discern remarks concerning outer appearance and attributes of the apostles which could show possible influence of representations in art or vice versa (1.13.19). The last section brings the considerations from the other sections together (1.13.20).

811 Cf. Cameron (2004) 333–6 about the didactic nature of their poetry and *passim* about the common development of Greek and Latin poetry in the fourth century.

812 Nevertheless, Gregory left an enormous oeuvre, which on its own surpasses all Christian poetical production in the West in the fourth century up to Ambrose and Damasus.

1.13.2 *Frequency of Occurrence of the Apostles*

The popularity of the various apostles can be partly detected by investigating how often they are mentioned. Paul is a special case in this respect. Although generally considered an apostle, he is absent in poetry of the first half of the fourth century, in which the gospels were the most important Biblical source of inspiration (Juvencus, Proba and Hilary). But apart from these three early poets, every other poet mentions Peter and Paul far more often than any of the other apostles. Peter is more popular than Paul; only Paulinus seems to prefer the latter. Gregory of Nazianzus is the only poet who mentions all twelve apostles in his I,1,19: a hexametrical poem enumerating the apostles.

1.13.3 *The Twelve Apostles*

The twelve apostles together (*concordia duodecim*) most often appear in Juvencus' versification of the gospels. This is in accordance with the nature of his epic: a faithful versification of the gospels. The other poets also refer to the twelve, more or less as often as they refer to Peter or Paul. The twelve are absent from the oeuvres of Damasus and Ambrose (and Claudian's small *c.m.* 50), which underlines the particular interest of these poets in the cult of the saints, who are most often venerated separately.

Naturally, Juvencus mentions most Biblical stories in which the twelve apostles are involved, since he versified the gospels. Juvencus emphasised that the apostles were followers of Christ. This view on the group of the apostles remained predominant in the fourth century: it was determined by their Biblical representation. For most poets, the twelve apostles are a group of exemplary Christians (cf. esp. Hil. *Hymnum dicat turba fratrum* 30: *Duodecim uiros probauit* (sc. Jesus) *per quos uita discitur*) because they were witnesses of the *Christi uitalia gesta*, as Juvencus puts it (*evang. prooemium* 19). In this way they are incomparable to other holy men. They can also cure Christians through the Christian dogma (Paulinus, *c.* 19,35–8).

Whitsun is only mentioned by Paulinus (*c.* 27,95–106). Although this story confirms the apostles' peculiar prestige after Jesus' death—and although the story might be considered as one of the few Biblical events in which the apostles together are the main characters—it was not considered particularly relevant by early Christian poets. This feature points to the importance of Christ in the representation of the group of apostles: without him, the twelve were hardly of any interest to early Christian men of letters. Moreover, Whitsun was not yet firmly established as a Christian feast day at the end of the fourth century.

The unity among the twelve apostles is consistently emphasised, not only through negligence of events from the personal lives of most of the apostles,

but also through emphasis on the coherence of the group. This seems the counterpart of the *concordia apostolorum* of Peter and Paul.⁸¹³ More than the individual apostles, those two groups are predominant in early Christian poetry. At several places, Juvencus tries to avoid possible interpretations of discord within the group of apostles (e.g. *evang.* 3,126 and 4,508). Gregory explicitly discusses the problematic position of Judas: did he contaminate the other apostles by his place among them? The answer is clearly negative (1,2,1 680–3). Another example is Gregory's attempt to mitigate the argument between Peter and Paul revealed by Gal 2.11–4 (see 1,2,25 222–8).

This emphasis on unity can be explained from the socio-political context of the fourth century. In an age in which dogmatic disputes were abundant, leading figures from the largest group of Christians, “catholics” in the original sense of the word, understandably sought to emphasise the importance of unity within their church. These leading figures consisted of the clergy, to which almost all the poets belonged. The apostles themselves were deemed appropriate persons to propagate unity. Besides their authority, they were already depicted as a group in the canonical books (which were also propagated by the Church). The Christian poets therefore chose them to exemplify the concept of unity they wanted to promote within the Church. The apostles' authority was based on their presence at Jesus' stay on earth: they were the witnesses of the miracles he performed. Moreover, some of them allegedly took the initiative to write down what had happened when the oral transmission of Christian events was about to suffer from the death of the first generation(s) of Christians.⁸¹⁴ Through the apostles Christians could find the message of Christ.

The term *apostolicus* does not remain restricted to aspects of the apostles alone, but also becomes a sort of hallmark for everything which is deemed orthodoxly Christian, e.g. writings (accepted in the Biblical canon), but also relics of martyrs. This aspect primarily occurs in Paulinus' oeuvre. He does not distinguish between the actual apostolic relics present in Nola and relics of other martyrs, but calls them both *apostolic*. Paulinus also alludes to the bishopric with the word *apostolicus*, e.g. in c. 25,62 (where he denotes the family of a bishop *gens apostolica*). The singular *apostolus* nearly always refers to Paul, which is common in early Christian literature in general. *Apostoli* sometimes

813 On their and other saint pairs' role in promoting unity, see Brown (1981) 97. The cult of the saints, which tended to emphasise individual characters more than the unity of the group, actually contributed to a sense of unity (at least among the elite): relics became a sign of friendship, and were spread across the Roman empire to create bonds between distant people, see e.g. id. 93–7.

814 Cf. for this phenomenon Assmann (2005) 31–2 and Kirk (2005) 5.

indicates Peter and Paul, which again highlights their outstanding popularity and authority (compared to the other apostles). The twelve are in most cases indicated with the word *discipuli*. Other designations are also found, like *socii* and *apostoli*, without difference in meaning.

Juvenius, Proba, Prudentius, Paulinus and Gregory all refer to the task which Jesus charged on the apostles (see e.g. Matt 10.1 and Mark 16.15–8). Paulinus is the only poet to focus specifically the different regions to which the apostles were sent in apocryphal traditions (see c. 19).

The Sermon on the Mount is mentioned by Juvenius, Proba and Gregory. However, the poets do not emphasise the master-pupil relationship between Christ and the apostles often. The doubts and disbelief of the apostles is often extenuated, but not hidden. Despite their catechetical purposes, the early Christian poets do not put their audience on a par with the apostles as pupils of Christ. The apostles remain exemplary men from a distant past.

If metaphors are used in the description of the apostles, they are connected mostly with the sea or with fishing. This can be explained by the fact that—according to the Scriptures—most of them had been fishers before their apostleship (cf. Gregory 11,1,12 192–205), but also since several stories in the gospels refer to it: e.g. the story about Jesus walking on the waves, Matt 14.22–33, and Jesus who stills the storm, Matt 8.23–7. These two stories are particularly popular among early Christian poets. Paulinus once refers to the apostles as doves (*ep.* 32,10,4–6), indicating that they were depicted as such on a mosaic.

Only Juvenius and Proba refer to the Last Supper (Prudentius mentions Judas' presence). The apparitions of Jesus to the apostles after his Resurrection occur more frequently, in Juvenius, Proba, Hilary, Gregory and Paulinus. Prudentius is the poet who most often compares the Old to the New Testament by recounting typological references to the apostles, e.g. in *ditt.* 14 and 15. He is also the poet who most often names the twelve through their number. Not only Prudentius, but also Gregory (probably, in 1,1,19), Amphilochius (v. 209) and Paulinus (c. 15,355–7; 26,283–5; 27,209–12) link the apostles to the patriarchs or prophets of the Old Testament. Paulinus even aims at combining the two testaments in the architectural structures of his monastic complex. Earlier poets who pay relatively much attention to the apostles (Juvenius and Proba) did not yet dare to add much exegesis to their Biblical versifications: this explains the lack of typological references to the twelve in their oeuvre. Furthermore, in the second half of the fourth century exegesis became more widely known and easier available.

Most apocryphal narratives also focus on acts of individuals instead of the twelve as a group. This probably had to do with the prestige the canonical gospels acquainted very early: they already presented the life story of the apostles

on earth and it was difficult for authors also to discuss the same topic, albeit in another way. However, non-canonical stories could tell about periods not described in the canon without being necessarily condemned by ecclesiastical authorities (cf. 1.13.18).

In sum, the twelve apostles do not often appear in a narrative context in early Christian poetry (Juvenecus' poem is an exception). The symbolic value of them as followers and witnesses of Christ was more important than the stories that were known about them.

1.13.4 *The Pair of Peter and Paul*

In many cases, Peter and Paul are mentioned together (*concordia apostolorum*). Their martyrdom in Rome, which according to tradition took place on the same date (29 June), is often referred to. Nevertheless, only little information about this event is given. The fact that they died in Rome is consistently emphasised (cf. below), but other details are lacking. This might have to do with the fact that the story was not included in the Biblical canon, which was promoted by the Church (cf. 1.13.18). Only Commodianus and Prudentius mention Nero as the emperor who put Peter and Paul to death (*C.* 827–8 and *perist.* 12,11; 23). The most significant description of the death of the two apostles is given by Prudentius, who devoted his twelfth hymn to them. He is the only poet to explicitly mention Paul's death by decapitation. Ambrose only describes Peter's death (by crucifixion) in detail in his twelfth hymn, which is much shorter than Prudentius' hymn. Damasus' *ep.* 20 emphasises Rome's position as a place of martyrdom by contrasting it to the East, the region that brought forth the apostles. Damasus' efforts to promote Rome as the first bishopric are mostly reflected in the elaborate hymns just mentioned. Prudentius explicitly invokes his audience to celebrate the feast day of the apostles in Rome. Gregory of Nazianzus (11,1,14 64) also mentions Rome, like Paulinus. The latter connected the city with the relics (*Inde Petrum et Paulum Romana fixit*—sc. *Christus*—*in urbe*, c. 19,54), comparing the empire's former capital to his own Nola.

The representation of the *principes apostolorum* most clearly expresses the interest in comparisons of the past and the (fourth century) present: the foundational myth of Rome (traditionally connected with Romulus and Remus and Aeneas) was enriched with a Christian version in which the martyrdom of Peter and Paul was most important. In a similar way, Damasus called Peter and Paul *noua sidera* (*ep.* 20,7), which reminded his audience of the traditional Roman defenders Castor and Pollux. Although a direct comparison between Peter and Paul and the traditional founders of Rome was hardly ever made in poetry, the emphasis on the apostles' death in Rome and the Christian notion

of death as a new beginning, created a new starting point of history (without necessarily ignoring the other). The martyrdom of the two apostles became a new 'foundational myth'. The representation of Peter and Paul in poetry shows that fourth century Christian poets were bearers and communicators of this myth.⁸¹⁵ They try to shape the memory of Peter and Paul in Rome by means of their poetry. However, it was not so much their artistic vocation that incited them to do so, but their social position within ecclesiastical hierarchy. Poetry was one of the means by which they expressed Christian and ecclesiastical ideas, which was even more convenient since the source of the pagan foundational myth was found in poetry too: Vergil's *Aeneid*.

At the same time, the apostles' presence is also referred to in other ways, most prominently by the construction of the 'imperial' Basilicas of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. By contrast, the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople did not play a role in poetry (it was only mentioned in Greg. Naz. II,1,16 59). Prudentius described the two Roman churches in *perist.* 12 and exhorted his readership to celebrate the feast of Peter and Paul on the 29th of June (*perist.* 12,65–6). This is one of the ways in which the poetry of these days was a reflection of and was connected with liturgical practice. Damasus' epigram 20—emphasising the apostles' former presence *ad catacumbas*—deliberately contributed to the abandoning of the cult for Peter and Paul from this church.

Prudentius provides perhaps the most striking example of the special position of Peter and Paul by devoting to them the prefaces of his two books *Contra Symmachum*. In both cases he applies a story described in the New Testament to a (more or less) contemporary situation. By doing this, he actualises the apostles' presence in a way reminding of the actual power emanating from relics of martyrs long dead (including the apostles). This is even more significant in a poem openly addressing one of the best known pagan intellectuals of the time: Symmachus. Another significant example of the importance of Peter and Paul is their presence in Claudian's satirical poem on James. They were the symbols *par excellence* of the apostles, but also of the cult of the saints in general (see below). In *perist.* 12,29–56 Prudentius seems to attribute a spiritual role to Peter, whereas Paul is connected to the worldly power of the Roman emperor.

815 Foundational myths are part of the so-called "kulturelle Gedächtnis", cf. Assmann (2005 (1992)) 52–5, i.e. the cultural memory of Rome and gradually of the whole Catholic Church. Assmann mentions, among others, priests and writers as bearers of the tradition: in poetry of the fourth century these two groups of people are nearly always the same. He also points to the fact that foundational myths are most often linked to "etwas Sakrales" (p. 52), as is the case here.

Huskinson (1982) already convincingly argued that the *concordia* between Peter and Paul was promoted most vigorously in the second half of the century (360–410), but did not devote much attention to the role of poetry.⁸¹⁶ The foregoing investigation, however, confirms that his conclusions—mainly drawn on the basis of textual (prose) and material evidence—also hold true for the poetic tradition. Besides the examples given above, Gregory's obvious attempt to underscore the unity between Peter and Paul in his treatment of the conflict between the two described in Gal 2.11–4 deserves to be mentioned (1,2,25 222–8).

Apart from their martyrdom and the use of that event as an argument in favour of Rome's special status by Roman bishops and their supporters (like Ambrose and Prudentius), Peter and Paul are of course often mentioned because they are better known from the Bible than the other apostles. Moreover, both apostles had letters on their name included in the Biblical canon: Paul was far more important than Peter in this respect. No poet doubts the genuineness of the New Testament writings attributed to one of the apostles.

1.13.5 *Peter*

Almost all authors refer in one way or another to Peter's special position (based on Matt 16.18–9) within the group of apostles. Five authors—who do not often mention the apostles—ignore this tendency: Commodianus and Hilary both wrote before the Roman bishop started to claim his apostolic ancestry more vigorously (from the papacy of Damasus onwards).⁸¹⁷ Amphilochius lived far from Rome and only mentioned the apostles in the context of the Biblical canon. Claudian mentioned the apostles in a short satirical poem for a specific occasion; Palladas is a similar case. It is not surprising that Peter is not particularly exalted in these works. The other poets pay more attention to Peter. In the case of Damasus, the Roman bishop, the self-interest of the author is evident. But after him, influential writers such as Ambrose, Prudentius and Paulinus testify to the fact that Peter had a special position and they did not hide that he was closely connected to the city of Rome. These authors did not live in Rome and Prudentius even did not have a function within the Church. To be sure, they did not explicitly exalt the bishop of Rome, but their references to

816 More recent literature underscoring the aspect of unity in the representation of apostles in early Christian poetry includes Lønstrup (2010) and Sághy (2000).

817 However, a tradition of Rome's primacy based on Peter's presence in Rome was already apparent in the second century, see e.g. Hack (1997); see id. pp. 286–90 for his analysis of Cyprian's *De unitate ecclesiae*, which at the same time emphasises the apostles' unity and Peter's outstanding position among them.

Matt 16.18–9 were sufficiently clear to remind their audience of the bishop's extraordinary position. The martyrdom of Peter (and Paul) in Rome was another story that played a role in this debate, although it was also mentioned to evoke the basilicas of the apostles and their relics.

Some passages explicitly refer to the primacy of the Roman bishop, especially Prudentius' *perist.* 2,461–4: *alter, cathedram possidens / primam, recludit creditas / aeternitatis ianuas*. The meaning of *cathedra prima* cannot be misunderstood (cf. *perist.* 11,31–2 and *Oratio consulis Ausonii versibus rhopalicis* 32. Juvenius already referred to the idea of Rome's primacy some decades before Damasus' active promotion of the concept (see e.g. *evang.* 3,534).

Another popular story about Peter in poetry is his attempt to walk on the waves (Matt 14.22–33). This story naturally found its place in Juvenius' versification of the gospels, but was also chosen to be versified by Prudentius, Paulinus and in the poem called *Miracula Christi*. It shows the weakness of the apostle's faith, which is not a compliment to Peter at first sight. However, the versifications try to diminish Peter's guilt and focus on Jesus' saving force rather than Peter's feeble faith. The popularity of sea metaphors in early Christianity also accounts for the frequent references to this story. Water was connected to baptism, one of the most important rituals in the life of a Christian.

The famous story of Peter's denial is described by Juvenius, Ambrose and Prudentius. Ambrose's treatment of the story results in a more positive image of Peter than that in Juvenius. Whereas in the *Euangelia* the versification of Peter's denial is one of the few passages in the whole poem (besides explicit positive remarks added vis-à-vis the Bible) where the apostle is depicted less complimentary than in the Biblical account, Ambrose provides a positive exegesis of the story, accentuating that Peter's tears washed away his sin. This might be due to the ever-growing status of Peter since Juvenius wrote his epic as well as to the Christian exegetical tradition which in Ambrose's days had found a way to give a positive explanation for a story which was shameful for Peter at first sight. Prudentius *cath.* 1 is more in line with the Milanese bishop than with Juvenius. Comparable to the use of the story of Peter's attempt to walk on the waves, the story of the denial is used to present Peter as an *exemplum* for ordinary Christians of later times. The use of *exempla* in Roman literature was widespread and soon found its way into Biblical exegesis.⁸¹⁸

The cure of a paralysed man in the *Porta Speciosa* from Acts 3.1–10 can be found in both Prudentius (*ditt.* 45,181–4) and Paulinus (c. 20,241–51). This event fits the healing powers attributed to the relics of martyrs.

818 For the use of *exempla* in Roman literature see e.g. Van der Poel (2009) and Demoen (1996) 35–54 (pp. 51–4 for Christian examples).

The Transfiguration is mentioned by Juvenecus (*evang.* 3,316–52) and in the *Carmen de ternarii numeri excellentia* (v. 8), but nothing is said about the presence of Peter in particular in these passages that cannot be found in the Bible (Matt 17.1–9).

Several other stories about Peter are mentioned by only one poet. In Juvenecus' case references to less popular stories are the result of his endeavour to versify the whole gospel. Other poets occasionally use stories from the Acts of the Apostles, such as Peter's encounter with Simon Magus (Acts 8.9–24, cf. Greg. Naz. 1,2,12 430–1), his vision in Joppa (Acts 10.9–16, cf. Prud. *ditt.* 46,185–8) and his liberation from prison (Acts 12.1–19, cf. Paul. Nol. c. 15,260–5). Gregory also mentions the conflict between Peter and Paul (Gal 2.11–4, cf. Greg. Naz. 1,2,25 222–8).

One unique apocryphal reference (to *Acta Petri* 9) is found in Commodianus' work. This poet lived in a time when the distinction between canonical and non-canonical writings was less evident than in later periods. Another remark of non-canonical nature is found in Gregory (1,2,10 551: Peter feeds himself with lupines); its origin is obscure. It seems to be a reference to Peter's alleged austerity rather than a reference to a particular story.

Early Christian poetry shows a clear preference for the figure of Peter, but his representation is dominated by (short) references to his prominent position among the apostles. There is relatively little attention for the miracles he performed according to both canonical and apocryphal sources. Even at the end of the fourth century, when the cult of the saints was in full bloom, no poems were devoted to Peter alone. Ambrose and Prudentius apparently found his connection with Paul more important, since they did write a hymn on both apostles together.

1.13.6 *Paul*

Paul is mentioned most often on account of a quotation from his writings. Only Paulinus elaborates on the contemporary effects of his scriptures, in c. 24,263–98: Martinianus is literally rescued by the letters of Paul. This can be seen as the most outspoken result of a long tradition considering Paul as the "teacher of the heathens" (*doctor gentium*) and an intellectual among the apostles. The story seems an invention by Paulinus himself or otherwise was derived from oral tradition.

Extensive remarks about Paul's life are scarce. The most striking exception is Damasus' biographical first epigram, devoted to Paul and meant to precede an edition of the Pauline epistles. Damasus emphasises Paul's conversion, his change of name, the hardships he endured (described in 2 Cor 11.23–7) and his vision of heaven. Both the first and last event is also mentioned in the

Oratio consulis Ausonii versibus rhopalicis, but there is no reason to assume a link between the two poems. The hardships in Paul's life are found in Gregory too (1,2,2 202–9). The conversion is the one story from Paul's life that is mentioned in four different works (by different authors). This story was particularly appealing in the fourth century, when many people converted to Christianity. Damasus *ep.* 1,21 refers with some catchwords (*naufragium...serpentis dira uenena*) to the story of shipwreck and the snake on Malta which is extensively described in *c. Symm. praef.* 1. This last text is addressed to Symmachus: Paul was the most appropriate apostle to refer to in this context, since he was a former persecutor of Christians.

Paul's martyrdom has already been discussed above (references can be found in Commodianus, Prudentius and Gregory). Prudentius is the only poet stating that Paul foresaw his own death (*perist.* 12,28): he might have invented this himself to attribute prophetic faculty to the apostle, or he was influenced by hints in the book of Acts. Paul's vision of heaven (2 Cor 12.2–4, cf. below) is mentioned in Damasus' epigram and briefly described in the *Oratio consulis Ausonii versibus rhopalicis* 35. In this poem, his assistance in the lapidation of Stephen is admitted, but juxtaposed to his future, more positive role: *Fit doctor populi lapidantum constimulator* (id. 34). Paulinus refers to John's and Paul's power over paganism (Acts 16.16–8, also Acts 19.23–40) in *c.* 19,91–7.

Besides Paul's martyrdom, two apocryphal stories about Paul are mentioned: his conversation with a lion (Commodianus *C.A.* 627–8) and the hardships endured by him in the surroundings of Iconium (Greg. Naz. 1,2,3 87–8), a city connected with his disciple Thecla. Commodianus, as has been remarked earlier, seems to have been a poet working in a tradition different from the poets after him; Gregory is known to have had a special interest in Thecla and this seems the primary reason for him to mention her.

Although the life of Paul was particularly well documented in canonical texts, poets did not use this material extensively. None of them shows his admiration for the apostle in the way John Chrysostom did, for example.⁸¹⁹ The apostle Paul is mentioned slightly less often than Peter in early Christian poetry. Especially Damasus (but only in his first epigram) and Gregory mention Paul. In the case of Gregory, this might reflect Paul's particular popularity in the East.

819 Paul was John Chrysostom's "favourite saint and homiletical obsession", as Mitchell (2000) 91 puts it. The Church Father used more than 65 epithets for Paul—nearly always complimentary—, see id. 69–93 (pp. 74–5, note 26 in particular).

1.13.7 *Judas*

Judas is mentioned by several poets, always in relation to Christ's death: Juvenecus, Proba, Gregory and Prudentius. It is interesting that Paulinus, despite his considerable oeuvre and his tendency to mention individual apostles, shows no interest in Judas. This lack of interest seems to confirm a general tendency of his work: Paulinus propagates the Christian faith without being interested in Biblical stories as such, or in Christ's adversaries. The same seems to be at stake in the case of Damasus and Ambrose. These three poets show a kind of triumphalism about Christianity's victory over paganism, which can hardly bear a betrayer's presence. The other poets mentioned the apostles less often, so that Judas' absence in their work is less striking.

Judas is primarily depicted as a betrayer and an enemy of Christ, but his portrayal could have been worse, especially in the light of awful descriptions like the one in Papias' fragment 18 or in Sedulius' fifth century Biblical epic (*Carmen paschale* 5,59–61). The poets' view seems to be in accordance with the general depiction of Judas in early Christian literature.⁸²⁰ Proba compares Judas to Galaesus, a righteous enemy of Aeneas. She even suggests that Judas could be considered a mediator of peace (*cento* 593–5). Prudentius only discusses him through the focalisation of *Auaritia*, who is of course a negative character herself. Prudentius' remarkable way of presentation results also in an opportunity for Christianity's adversaries to speak. A more negative opinion would be that Prudentius shows an anti-Semitic side by permitting *Auaritia* to praise Judas, who was corrupted by the Pharisees. Gregory does depict Judas as a negative character (comparing him to Lucifer, e.g. 1,2,3 48), but allows himself a hypothetical thought on Judas bringing forth something good (1,2,1 485–8). In general, relatively much weight is attributed to the fact that Judas betrayed Jesus for money.⁸²¹

Apart from Peter and Paul, Judas is one of the apostles who is mentioned most often in poetry. This is in accordance with the importance of Christ's passion as the main work of Salvation. No stories about Judas are told that are not found in the Bible.

1.13.8 *John*

As in other Christian sources, John the apostle and the evangelist were considered one and the same man by early Christian poets. The apostle proper does

820 Cf. Stotz (2004).

821 This is of course one of the most conspicuous elements of the Biblical account. Moreover, greed is a main sin in all kinds of ethics in general, see Assmann (2005) 140–1.

not receive much attention. Ambrose forms an exception, since he devoted a hymn to John. It is the most extensive piece on an individual apostle other than Peter or Paul in Christian poetry up to 400. The hymn on Andrew by pseudo-Damasus is difficult to date, but could be from around the same time. Ambrose's hymn shows a special reverence for the scriptures of John, most clearly expressed by the phrasing *arcana Iohannes Dei / fatu reuelauit sacro* (vv. 3–4, cf. *Seleuc.* 292–3). Appreciation for John's writings is also evident in the works of Amphilochius and Prudentius. Ambrose also mentions the legend about John surviving boiling oil, which has first been attested by Tertullian (*praes. haer.* 36,3). By this event, John surpassed martyrs who died for their faith (vv. 26–7). Ambrose clearly felt the need to explain how one of the apostles could not have undergone martyrdom. His interest in the writings of John stimulated him to venerate John as a martyr too. Moreover, John's relics arrived in Milan around the same period.

Another poet who provides some details about John is Paulinus of Nola. Remarkable is the reference to a story in the apocryphal *Acta Johannis* (37–45) about John chasing Diana out of Ephesus (c. 19,95). This is one of the rare examples of apocryphal apostle stories used in poetry and one of the very few passages in which the apostles are directly contrasted to pagan Gods (cf. *Prud. perist.* 2,469–70). Paulinus even presents John as a symbol of God's gifts to Asia (c. 19,80). The miracle at the *Porta Speciosa* is reported by Prudentius (*ditt.* 45,181–4) and Paulinus, but both focus on Peter (Prudentius does not even mention John).

Juvenius pays some attention to John's vocation (more elaborately in Ambrose), but does not highlight him in any way. He even omits his name in most cases, by calling him 'son of Zebedee'. In *evang.* 3,590–2 he tries to exonerate John (and James) from hubris and the fault of giving offence to the other apostles. However, this is more a concern for unity than a concern for the individual apostle. The only other fact from John's life that is not mentioned by Ambrose alone is his nickname 'son of thunder' which he shared with his brother James according to Mark 3.17. Amphilochius explains this name by John's thundering voice, Ambrose by his strong faith.

John is thus not mentioned very often, but some stories from the New Testament as well as from apocryphal traditions do appear in poetry. The main reason for his relatively frequent presence in poetry, compared to most of the other apostles, was his authorship of Biblical texts. John is mentioned by three poets who vigorously promoted the cult of the saints, and popular belief had an influence on the poetical accounts about him: this seems to reflect an emerging cult for John at the end of the fourth century.

1.13.9 *Thomas*

Thomas is not mentioned very often and only by poets at the chronological extremes of the corpus: Commodianus and Juvenius, Paulinus and Claudian. The fact that Thomas is mentioned in Claudian's satirical poem (*c.m.* 50) about excessive trust in saints, is striking: the suggestion that James venerated an apostle openly doubting his master's Resurrection might have strengthened the mockery of the poem. At the same time, the poem proves that the apostle Thomas was relatively well-known, also among less fanatic Christians, since he could be used as an example.

The disbelief of Thomas is also mentioned by Commodianus and Paulinus. The latter tries to present him as an example for Christians lacking faith (see especially the long passage in *carmen* 31,149–216). Paulinus is the only author who explicitly refers to Thomas' missionary work, albeit very briefly. India is mentioned as Thomas' working area. The contrast with Juvenius, who does not even mention the famous story of Thomas' doubt, is remarkable. Paulinus had a personal interest in promoting Thomas, since his relics lay in his church.

1.13.10 *Matthew*

Similarly to John's case, no distinction is made between the apostle Matthew and the evangelist of the same name in early Christian poetry. Matthew is positively depicted by Juvenius in the account of his vocation (*evang.* 2,95–8). Gregory uses him as an example of someone who converted (referring explicitly to his former profession of tax-collector, see 11,1,12 220–1). Apocryphal stories about Matthew are not found, except for a remark by Paulinus about his missionary area Parthia (*c.* 19,81). Matthew's writings are sometimes mentioned by Gregory and praised as inspired texts.

Compared to John, Matthew's smaller presence in poetry might be explained by the fact that he is mentioned less often in the Bible and also because of the particular appreciation of the Gospel of John over the other gospels in late antiquity. Moreover, John was also considered the author of three letters included in the New Testament, while Matthew was the author of one gospel only.

1.13.11 *Andrew*

Although Andrew is nowadays known as the legendary founder of Constantinople's episcopal see, his position in early Christian poetry is rather marginal since this legend was not yet widely in circulation. Around 400, the interest in the apostle seems to grow. The pseudo-Damasian hymn devoted to him confirms the existence of apocryphal traditions about the apostle. The

connection with Constantinople is mentioned by Paulinus of Nola, who recalls the tour of Andrew's and Timothy's relics to Constantinople, but the poet does not elaborate on a particular status for Andrew in the 'new Rome'. More important for him was the presence of Andrew's relics in Nola. In c. 27,406–10 Paulinus therefore devotes some verses to Andrew: he mentions that Andrew worked in Greece and died in Patras, which is in accordance with the *Acta Andreae*. He even hints at Aeneas in his description of Andrew, to the honour of the latter (maybe also in competition with Rome, which he compared to Nola in c. 13,26–30). Andrew's profession as a fisherman is also mentioned by Paulinus, as it is by Juvenecus. The epic poet praises Andrew primarily because he wants to praise his brother Peter.

Andrew clearly did not have an important place in the literary tradition, although the origins of a more widespread cult for the apostle are visible in the hymn attributed to Damasus and the fact that Andrew's relics were transported to Constantinople shortly after its foundation.

1.13.12 *Philip*

Philip is only poorly represented in the corpus of early Christian poetry. Paulinus only mentions that he worked among the Phrygians (c. 19,82), which is in accordance with apocryphal stories. Juvenecus versifies the story of the vocation of Philip and Nathanael and adds a positive note about Philip's choice for Christ in *evang.* 2,101.

1.13.13 *James of Zebedee*

James of Zebedee ("the elder") is only mentioned by Juvenecus (and of course in Gregory's 1,1,19): his vocation and the question of his mother are mentioned. Paulinus does not mention the apostle in his c. 19 about the apostle's missionary activities. James is also omitted in the *Carmen de ternarii numeri excellentia* where the Transfiguration is mentioned. This confirms the lack of interest in this apostle in poetry until the fifth century. This is somewhat surprising, since James is the only apostle whose martyrdom is mentioned in the Bible (Acts 12.2). It appears that the passage in Acts impeded the development of traditions on the apostles' death rather than stimulated them.⁸²² The martyrdom of Stephen (the first described in the New Testament) was not often mentioned either. The martyrdom of Peter and Paul was considered more important. Moreover, James' connections to the Christian community in Jerusalem were not particularly appealing to early Christian poets writing in regions far away from this city.

822 Cf. Burnet (2014) 321.

1.13.14 *Bartholomew*

Apart from Gregory's 1,1,19 only one poem does contain a reference to Bartholomew: the satirical poem by Claudian (*c.m.* 50). Bartholomew is mentioned with Thomas, Peter and Paul. Although Bartholomew is almost never mentioned in poetry, the fact that it is Claudian who refers to him, suggests that the apostle was quite well known. It would have made no sense for Claudian to mention a saint whom people had never heard of. Moreover, Bartholomew is relatively often mentioned in apocryphal writings. Given the absence of Bartholomew in other writers, he might also have been a saint in favour by a small group of people, or by James—the addressee of the poem—in particular.

1.13.15 *Nathanael*

Juvenius is the only poet to mention Nathanael (*evang.* 2,99–126). This is remarkable, since this Biblical story about Nathanael is described in John, whereas Juvenius primarily follows the Gospel of Matthew. It was thus a deliberate choice to include the story in his poem. Juvenius maybe held the opinion that Nathanael was the same person who is called Bartholomew elsewhere in the gospels, as is generally assumed nowadays.

1.13.16 *Lebbaeus/Thaddeus*

Lebbaeus is only mentioned by Paulinus. Gregory (1,1,19) calls him by one of the other names given to him: Thaddeus. Paulinus refers to Lebbaeus, presumably because he had heard about him (by a visitor of Nola?) and because of the alliteration between his missionary area Libya and his name. The fact that even the name of this apostle is disputed is symptomatic for his status in early Christianity.

1.13.17 *James of Alphaeus, Matthias and Simon*

Three apostles remain who have not been mentioned at all (with Gregory's 1,1,19 as an exception): James the son of Alphaeus, Matthias and Simon. They were apostles of little interest, mainly because Biblical writings do not often mention them. The same is true for the apostles who are mentioned only once or twice, like Philip, James of Zebedee and Bartholomew (and Nathanael).

In the Bible, James of Alphaeus ("the younger") is only mentioned in the apostle lists. However, a strong tradition favoured by Jerome identified him with James 'brother of the Lord', who seems to have been the leader of the Christians in Jerusalem (see e.g. Gal 1.19).⁸²³ Therefore, he might have been too closely linked to the Eastern part of the empire for Latin poets to mention him

823 Burnet (2014) 591–615 for the confusion of traditions about the apostle; 601–5 for Jerome.

or too much associated with the Jewish origins of Christianity. Another reason for James's absence in poetry might be that he was but rarely mentioned in apocryphal literature (which probably reflects oral tradition in general).⁸²⁴

Matthias is only mentioned in the Bible when he is chosen to replace Judas the betrayer. He did not occur in the gospels, which might explain his absence in poetry, since the apostles were primarily deemed important as witnesses of Christ. Apocryphal writings about him were not used in early Christian poetry.⁸²⁵

The apostle Simon the Canaanite or Simon the Zealot was the successor of James (Eusebius *h.e.* 3,11; 3,22; 3,32 1–6; 4,22 4), head of the Christian community in Jerusalem. His absence in any narrative scene in the Bible is the reason for his absence in Christian poetry.⁸²⁶ In the Western tradition, the apostles Simon and Judas Thadaeus or Lebbaeus were often confused.⁸²⁷

1.13.18 *The Canon, the Apocrypha and Beyond*

After some first, remarkable attempts (Commodianus, Optatian Porphyry) a Christian poetical tradition actually started with Juvenius' versification of the Biblical gospels. Although the canon was not definitively established in the time of Juvenius and Proba, the dispute about its contents was nearly settled. Already in an early phase (the second century) the narrative books of the canon—the four gospels and the Book of Acts—were by and large considered authentic and more authoritative than most of the other writings that narrated the lives of Jesus, the apostles and other Biblical figures.⁸²⁸ Nevertheless, apocryphal writings were spread in the whole empire and enjoyed much popularity

824 De Santos Otero (1999⁶) 434–5, mentions an *Acta Iacobi Minoris* in Coptic and Latin (in pseudo-Abdias' compilation of apocryphal acts, written in the sixth century). In Schneemelcher (1999^{6a}) one *epistula* (pp. 234–44) and two “revelations” (pp. 253–75) are included on his name, but these rather consist of ‘secret’ messages from Christ (that were, according to the text, revealed to James) than of remarks concerning James' own life. The “Second Revelation of James” is an exception, since it (probably) mentions James' death, see Funk (1999⁶) 274–5.

825 For apocryphal writings about this apostle see Schneemelcher (1999^{6c}) 399–403 (*Acta Andreae et Matthiae apud anthropophagos*) and 414–7 (*Martyrium Matthaei, Passio Matthaei* and *Acta Matthaei in Kahenat*).

826 Cf. the poor representation in the apocrypha: De Santos Otero (1999⁶) 435–8 mentions an *Acta Simonis Cananaei* (in Coptic) and a *Passio Simonis et Iudae* in Latin. The latter is found in pseudo-Abdias and its origins do not seem to antedate the fifth century.

827 De Santos Otero (1999⁶) 435.

828 Schneemelcher (1999^{6a}) 7–40, pp. 19–20 in particular.

(see 2.2.1).⁸²⁹ This is reflected in the works of Christian authors. They show an ambivalent attitude towards the apocrypha. On the one hand they condemn them (see in poetry Amph. *iambi* 251–60 and Greg. Naz. I,1,12 6–8), on the other they refer to apocryphal stories.

However, those non-Biblical references are scarce, which is in contrast with the growing concern for biography in the imperial period and the rise of the cult of the saints in the later fourth century.⁸³⁰ The deaths of Peter (by crucifixion) and Paul (by decapitation) in Rome are exceptions. Although this story is not described in the canonical writings of the New Testament, it was very early accepted as genuine (cf. e.g. Ir. *Ad Haer.* 3,3,2–3 and Eus. *h.e.* 2,25,7–8) and was not really challenged. Moreover, many poets supported the Roman Church, which—whatever objections it might have had against apocryphal, unorthodox stories—had a strong self-interest in this story. This fits the general tendency to define canonicity by orthodoxy: stories about the lives of apostles that did not contradict Biblical dogma were thus less controversial than dogmatic texts which seemed to depart from the Biblical exegesis propagated by the Church. Maybe here lies the explanation for the references to several other apocryphal stories in early Christian poetry as well. Due to the interest in individual saints, apocryphal stories in poetry appear mostly in the second half of the fourth century. Commodianus is an exception: he refers to apocryphal stories of Peter and Paul never hinted at in the rest of the early Christian poetical tradition.

Paulinus shows an interest in the missionaries of the apostles (c. 19) that was shared by Gregory (see e.g. his oration 33), although the latter did not show that in his poetry. When a poem is devoted to one apostle, apocryphal stories are used more often than in other poems. In this case it seems almost necessary, due to a lack of Biblical material. This is the case with hymn 70 to Andrew by pseudo-Damasus and Ambrose's sixth hymn to John. Paulinus refers to a story known from the acts of John in c. 19,95. Gregory refers to a popular story about the strife between Peter and Simon the Magician in I,2,12 430–1 (and maybe in II,1,13 177). He also refers to Thecla several times.

Still, poetry does not reflect the wealth of non-canonical writings. This might be explained by the poets' position within the upper-class clergy: probably only few of the many non-canonical traditions actually reached them.

829 See e.g. Eusebius *h.e.* 6,12,2–6 about the Gospel of Peter, which was read in an orthodox church at Rhodes. Eusebius first permitted this, but when he became aware of some doctrinal deviations in this text he vigorously condemned its use (discussion in Roukema (2004) 103).

830 Cf. Francis (2003b) 579.

Most apocryphal literature was written in the East (it seems no coincidence that the only examples of lists of canonical books in poetry come from Greek poets) and Latin translations were probably not yet wide-spread at the end of the fourth century.

Both Biblical and apocryphal stories were situated in the remote past, from a fourth century perspective. At the same time, Christian poetry also referred to the contemporary or recent situation. Prudentius' poetry contains many references to fourth century politics. Juvencus addresses Constantine in his poem. In this way a double layer of historical references was constructed: in the first historical reconstruction, the mythical Roman past (cf. 1.13.4) was linked to the origins of Christianity, which lie in the first century when Christ and his apostles were on earth. Elaborating on that reconstruction, Christian poets also compared the origins of Christianity with their own time. The most striking examples are the prefaces to Prudentius' *Contra Symmachum*: Prudentius compares himself to Peter, the Church to Paul and the viper attacking Paul to Symmachus. In c. 31.375–6 Paulinus even suggests that he surpasses the apostles since he believes out of faith (c. 31.375–6, referring to John 20.29). This is a remarkable contrast with the (pretended) modesty of Commodianus, who considers himself a fly compared with Paul (*Instr.* 1.31.9). However: in most cases, the apostles are not (explicitly) linked to the situation contemporary to the poets.⁸³¹

Paulinus is an exception: he often refers to Felix who helped people in his parish. His story about Martinianus (c. 24,263–98) is an example of the supposed influence of an apostle (i.c. Paul) on an event in Paulinus' own time. Paulinus also pays attention to relics, especially in Nola, Rome and Constantinople, and to their power (esp. c. 19). Claudian seems to hint at the impotence of the apostles and saints in the world (c.m. 50). Other poets discuss the apostles as martyrs, but do not explicitly comment on their contemporary influence. However, they do present the apostles as examples of a good, Christian way of life (see e.g. Hil. Pict. *Hymnum dicat turba fratrum* 30).

1.13.19 *Physical Appearance, Attributes and Geography*

The physical appearance of the apostles (or other figures) is only rarely hinted at in the Biblical canon.⁸³² This is probably the reason why some remarks about the apostles' appearance in apocryphal literature have received much

831 Given the importance of the actualisation of the martyrs' power in early Christian culture—for which see Brown (1981) 86–105, pp. 81–2 in particular—references to contemporary events were actually to be expected. Brown does not mention poetry.

832 Malherbe (1986) 172.

attention. The most famous passage is a description of the appearance of Paul in the *Acta Pauli* 3,2,⁸³³ but it has also been argued that there is a Byzantine description of Peter bearing traces of an old text.⁸³⁴ Poetical references are generally ignored in the discussion about early Christian ideas concerning the apostles' appearance.

Indeed, the investigation of poetry reveals that the appearance of the apostles did not interest early Christian poets, although *ecphraseis* of images and other works of art were popular in late antique literature.⁸³⁵ The same has been concluded in studies on John Chrysostom's praise of Paul: even when he uses metaphors of the body, he uses them allegorically.⁸³⁶ Especially in this case, however, the lack of a tradition in the visual arts might have impeded poets from referring to the apostles' appearance; early Christian poets did not have many literary sources and newly invented descriptions of the apostles might have alienated or offended their audience. No description in the proper meaning of the word is found. Aspects of the apostles' appearance occur only in few cases and most of these instances do not undisputedly concern appearance at all: in Proba's cento the apostles are once referred to as *nudati socii* (*CP* 551). The apostles are described as sailors or fishermen (cf. e.g. Ambrose, hymn 1,13 and 6,5–16) in a passage rephrasing Matt 8.23–7 and Matt 14.22–32: these references are restricted to a situation in a particular narrative context. The same is true for Paul's ashen skin mentioned in *c. Symm. praef.* 2,31 (cf. Acts 28.1–6).

The other references concern Peter. In Proba's cento he is called *senior* (*CP* 642) in a passage added to the Biblical story by the poetess. Of course, this word is used to denote Peter's authority among the disciples, but it might also suggest that he was an old(er) man (cf. Claud. *c.m.* 50,1).

833 See Grant (1982) and the article by Malherbe (1986) which includes a response to Grant's suggestion that the description of Paul was based on a poem by Archilochus. Cf. Callon (2014).

834 Matthews (1996). A description of the appearance of Bartholomew also exists, in the Latin *Passio Bartholomaei*. It probably dates from the sixth century. See Burnet (2014) 469; for the *Passio* see also Schneemelcher (1999^{6c}) 407–8.

835 By contrast, cf. Heuzé (1985) about Vergil (p. 635): "(...) oui, si l'on excepte en partie les *Géorgiques*, le corps humain est bien représenté dans l'œuvre de Virgile. Soit directement, quand il est expressément désigné au regard du lecteur; soit indirectement, quand, dans le cours de l'œuvre, il se déguise en acteur qui serait là pour autre chose: mais nous avons essayé de ne pas nous laisser abuser par ce masque et, en scrutant minutieusement le texte, nous avons découvert que l'image de ce corps était aussi complète que le permettaient les Muses."

836 See Mitchell (2000) 94–134; John Chrysostom did know the *Acta Pauli* that contain the description of Paul's appearance, see id. 98–9. Ficker (1887) 47 already noticed the lack of this kind of descriptions.

Given the representation of the apostles in the Middle Ages and beyond, a discussion of the physical appearance of the apostles cannot ignore the attributes which characterise the apostles in so many artistic expressions. These attributes, however, are not mentioned at all in poetry. Although some stories from which craftsmen or commissioners of art took the idea of attributes were used by early Christian poets, e.g. the crucifixion of Peter or the decapitation of Paul, attributes are never referred to as such. Neither is the apostles' dress described. In early Christian art they are normally depicted in gowns. Prudentius connects the apostles to the senate and its members (e.g. *psych.* 838–9), but this seems to be done out of other motives. Most probably, there was already an extensive tradition on the apostles and their attributes around 400, if the *Cena Cypriani* is dated correctly.⁸³⁷ This bizarre prose-writing enumerates dozens of Biblical figures and connects them with emblematic attributes, cloths, food etc. The apostles also frequently appear in this text.⁸³⁸ However, early Christian poets apparently did not follow the tradition behind this work.

In general, geographical references occupy a minor place in early Christian poetry. Juvenius' versification technique is characterised by a suppression of specific names, including topographical references. Paulinus is an exception in mentioning the regions where the apostles were believed to work after Jesus' ascension (c. 19). The fact that the Biblical stories about the apostles were situated in the East, near the borders of the Roman Empire, was only scarcely mentioned. That one was aware of this, is most explicitly revealed by Damasus' epigram 20: it 'deliberately admits' that Peter and Paul came from the East. Immediately thereafter, it provides the reason why Rome deserved it more to consider them her citizens. The attitude revealed in this poem is symptomatic for early Christian poetry in general. Although occasionally the Eastern background of the apostles is mentioned, in most cases the bond of Peter and Paul with Rome is emphasised, if there is any topographical reference made at all. Regarding Rome, poets only refer to the churches devoted to the apostles Peter and Paul, not only because of their liturgical significance in the fourth century, but also because they elaborate on recent (re)constructions of these buildings,

837 For this text, see the edition of Modesto (1992), text and translation on pp. 14–35. For the date (360–400), see id. 72–7.

838 In order of diminishing frequency: Peter (12), Judas (10), James (4), Paul (4), Andrew and Matthew (2). The absence of John and the high number of instances in which Judas is mentioned are surprising.

especially Prudentius. Besides Rome, Constantinople is sometimes mentioned (e.g. by Gregory and Paulinus). Nola occupies a central place in Paulinus' work.

Although topography on a larger scale did not attract much attention from the poets, references to specific places are more numerous. The basilicas devoted to Peter and Paul are mentioned to represent the magnificence of the Christian faith. They are referred to at the end of the fourth century, when the position of Christianity as the leading religion in the empire was definitively established. Moreover, they play an important role in the cult of the martyrs, which is promoted in poetry.⁸³⁹

1.13.20 *The Presence of the Apostles in Early Christian Poetry*

The role of the representation of the apostles in early Christian culture of the fourth century was threefold. First, as has been signalled above, this representation played a role in establishing the canon. Secondly, the legitimatisation of the Roman bishop as leader of all Christians was based on the idea that he succeeded the apostle Peter as leader of the Christian community in Rome. The Roman bishop was connected to the apostle Peter, but other bishops were also linked to the apostles. A third aspect of the apostles' representation in poetry was the promotion of the unity of the Church, in particular through an emphasis on the unity among the twelve (*concordia duodecim*) and between Peter and Paul (*concordia apostolorum*).

Christian poets from the third and fourth centuries had a clear preference for the apostles Peter and Paul—whom they often mentioned together. Their interest in the other apostles was considerably smaller—in accordance with Biblical information—, but increased when the cult of the saints became more important. The authors who promoted this cult (Ambrose, Prudentius, Paulinus, pseudo-Damasus) occasionally mentioned the other apostles. The first Christian poets followed the canon more faithfully, which resulted in texts devoted to the twelve apostles as a group. After Peter and Paul, Judas, Thomas, Andrew and John were mentioned most often, although the interest in Judas seems to have been waning a bit with the lapse of time (he was not mentioned by Damasus, Ambrose and Paulinus; Prudentius, however, did mention him). In general, the interest in the apostles was restricted. Although the poets dared

839 Cf. Keightley (2005) 135. The cult of the saints contains all important aspects of cultural memory, as enumerated by Diefenbach (2007) 25: rite (cf. Ambrose's liturgical hymns), text and monuments. This is not surprising since the "most authentic situation" in which memory comes to the fore, is that of the transition from life to death, see Assmann (2005) 33 and 60–3.

to restrain from an exclusive use of canonical stories about the apostles, the variety in stories was limited. Since the Bible did not offer much information about the individual apostles, they were represented as rather flat characters. It is therefore difficult to define the 'poetical apostle'. The apostles were referred to in all sorts of poetical Christian genres, which became more various in the second half of the fourth century.

What is most conspicuous is the information not given about the apostles. Despite their increasing popularity and the growing interest in the cult of the saints, details about their lives—which are found in apocryphal writings of the second century already—were not presented in poetry. This is in sharp contrast with (e.g.) saint Felix to whom Paulinus devoted a poetical biography (especially in c. 15 and 16). The apostles, however, primarily remained anonymous followers of Christ, except for Peter and Paul. Although the twelve were often mentioned, early Christian poetry was first and foremost focused on Christ. Individual saints were frequently praised (Felix by Paulinus and several saints in the poetry of Damasus, Ambrose and Prudentius), but other disciples than the *principes apostolorum* did not receive much attention. They seem to have been too closely associated with Christ to come out of his shadows.

Consequently, *the* poetical apostle remained on the background: he was part of a recognisable but loosely characterised group of men who followed Christ when he was on earth and spread the faith after his ascension. The apostles were significant figures in as far as they had witnessed Christ's deeds among the people—hence apostolicity was a criterion for orthodoxy—, but not as self-consciously acting characters. The acceptable information available about them (from the canonical New Testament) was fixed and succinct. Certain stories (e.g. Jesus walking on the waves) were clearly preferred to others that were evenly orthodox. The main characteristic of the poetical apostle was his function as a symbol of unity through emphasis on his role in a group. His physical appearance was of no importance and his missionary region only rarely mentioned.

Peter and Paul functioned as a pair, again to underscore the value of unity. These apostles, however, were also characters on their own. Peter was also highlighted as an individual apostle to explain the outstanding position of the catholic, but particularly the Roman, episcopate. Accidentally, other apostles came to the fore, especially John, Thomas and Judas. The latter often in a reversed relation to the concept of unity: despite his presence, the disciples had acted as a cohesive group; despite his betrayal, the unity among the disciples had remained. The story of Thomas' doubts was particularly appealing, presumably because it was recognizable for other Christians (cf. the story of

Peter's denial). Ambrose's interest in John may be explained by the reverence for his gospel and the position of John in the New Testament.

In sum, the development of the representation of the apostles in poetry shows characteristics of the development of Christian poetry in general. It had a slow start and was only beginning to blossom out in a period when other media—notably prose literature (e.g. the apocryphal acts)—already showed extensive interest in the apostles' representation.

Art, Poetry and the Apostles

The focus on a selection of authoritative texts is one of the main characteristics of Christianity. In the third century already, the composition of that collection was for the largest part undisputed. The canon of the New Testament, therefore, was the main source for the representations of the apostles in art and poetry. At the same time, many non-Biblical stories circulated that could also influence these representations.

In the second part of this book, the results of the first part are used to shed light on the relationship between art and poetry: all apostle stories that are referred to in poetry are presented together with the representations of the apostles in art. The special status of the Bible and the notions of orthodoxy that were connected to it, makes it useful to clearly distinguish between canonical and non-canonical sources of apostle stories that have been translated into art and poetry. Therefore, the first part of this chapter (2.1) discusses canonical stories, after which in the second part (2.2) other, non-canonical references are reflected upon. Appendices to each part (Appendix 1 and 2) offer a comprehensive overview of the variety of stories that play a role. These tables are clarified and discussed in the main text of the chapters.

In order to contextualise my analysis, the development of the Biblical canon is introduced briefly, with emphasis on the role of the apostles.

2.1 The Apostles and the Canon

Relatively soon after the death of Christ, a canon of Christian texts, i.e. a fixed group of books, excluding other texts, gained popularity: this was not a pre-conceived plan. Clear criteria for the composition of the canon did not exist.¹ Roughly three characteristics of canonical books have been discerned: they had to be considered inspired by the Holy Spirit, suitable for use in liturgy and equally authoritative as the books of the Old Testament. The concepts discussed in canonical texts had to be in line with the *regula fidei* or apostolic

1 See for the development of the Christian canon e.g. Schneemelcher (1999^{6b}).

doctrines: the 'apostolicity' of texts was therefore important. Catholicity also played a significant part.²

Although parts of the New Testament canon were still disputed in the fifth century, the first traces of the Biblical canon that is now widely accepted are found in a document from around the year 200 already: the so-called *Canon Muratori*. This text testifies to the fact that the four gospels (and the Acts of the Apostles, but see below) were accepted as authoritative by groups of Christians from an early phase onwards.

More than the other texts in the New Testament, the gospels and Acts are narrative texts and we know most of the apostles only through these books. Nevertheless, the main character of the gospels is Jesus Christ. This was also noticed by Christian poets, among whom Juvenius in his *Euangelia* considered the *Christi uitalia gesta* the main topic of his versification of the gospels.³ The apostles play a minor role compared to that of their master: most often they are solely witnesses of events in their master's life. Only in the Acts the apostles become characters acting on their own, since their master is no longer on earth. The text focuses on Peter and Paul in particular, although occasionally events from the lives of other apostles are mentioned as well.⁴ The Acts were included in the Biblical canon from the second century onwards, slightly later than the gospels and Paul's letters. Originally they were often connected to the so-called catholic letters (i.e. the New Testament letters of James, Peter, John and Judas) and formed a bridge between the gospels and the letters of Paul.⁵

From the apostles Bartholomew, Judas (also called Thaddeus or Lebbaeus), Simon (Zelotes) and James (son of Alphaeus) only their names and sometimes their profession and their kinship are indicated in the Bible. They do not play a part in any narrative scene. Regarding Matthew, his vocation is briefly described. Matthias is mentioned only once: when he is added to the eleven disciples who remained after Judas' betrayal (Acts 1.15–26). Thomas is mentioned several times, but only in the story of his disbelief he is the main character (John 20.24–9).

2 See Roukema (2004) 87 for the three criteria, *passim* for the development of the canon and the different criteria for canonicity the Church Fathers used. Eusebius was one of the Church Fathers who emphasised the importance of apostolic history, see e.g. Johnson (2008) 2.

3 See 1.2.1. The nature of the gospels as a literary genre has often been discussed, see e.g. Hägg (2012), pp. 148–56 in particular.

4 The text was presented as the acts of all the apostles, see Schröter (2003) 396: "(...) erzählte sie (die Apostelgeschichte, *rd*) die Taten und Verkündigung aller Apostel, wenn auch nur durch den Mund des Petrus." Cf id. 425: Peter's miracles were symbolic for the miracles performed by the other apostles.

5 Schröter (2003).

Occasionally, one of the other apostles actively participate in a Biblical story. The apostle who has the most conspicuous role is Peter. In the story of the Passion in particular, Judas is also brought into the limelight. The apostle John was part of the apostolic trio which also included Peter and James (the son of Zebedee) that was present at the raising of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5.22–43 and Luke 8.41–56) and the Transfiguration (Mark 9.2–13) and walked along with Christ further into Gethsemane (Mark 14.32). John was also present at the crucifixion (John 19.26) and did missionary work together with Peter, as is described in the Acts of the Apostles: he healed the lame at the *porta speciosa* (Acts 3.1–11), appeared before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4.13–9) and worked in Samaria, meeting Simon the Magician (Acts 8.14–25). Philip is mentioned several times in the Gospel of John: in the story of the conversion of Nathanael (John 1.43–6), in that of the multiplication of loaves and fishes (John 6.5–7) and as mediator in John 12.21–2. Philip was also sometimes confused with Philip the deacon: the latter was sent to the eunuch whom he ultimately baptised (Acts 8.26–40).

Although the role of the apostles in the story of the narrative parts of the New Testament writings is restricted, their importance is strongly felt in the authorship of most texts in the canon. No difference was made between the (alleged) writers of parts of the New Testament and the apostles whose names were homophonous. Thus, two out of four gospels were considered to have been written by apostles: the gospels of Matthew and John. The other evangelists were soon associated with the main apostles: Mark with Peter and Luke with Paul. Even if the authorship of several letters on the name of Paul is nowadays disputed, in antiquity they were considered to be written by the apostle. They contributed to Paul's status as an intellectual among the apostles. At the same time Paul, like Peter, was considered a performer of miracles.⁶ Two of the catholic letters were also believed to have been written by one of the apostles: those on the name of Peter and John. The letter by James was believed to have been written by James the brother of the Lord (cf. Eus. *h.e.* 2,23,23), i.e. not by James son of Zebedee or James son of Alphaeus (the two apostles called James).⁷

6 Cf. Brown (2004 (2000)) 309–10.

7 James the brother of the Lord was head of the Christian community in Jerusalem. He is also known from a letter by Paul (Gal 2.9), where he is called a pillar of the Church (with John and Cephas).

2.1.1 *Visual and Poetic Representations of Canonical Apostle Stories*

In the table in appendix 1, all canonical representations of the apostles in early Christian art and poetry have been taken into account. From entries that are entirely in italics it is doubtful whether the scene indicated is actually depicted. They are discussed below.

It appears that the twelve apostles as a group and the apostles Peter and Paul are most often represented, both in art and poetry. Except for the *principes apostolorum*, the apostles only rarely appear as individual figures. Gregory of Nazianzus was the only poet to mention all apostles individually, in a poem probably meant to learn their names by heart (1.1.19). In other poems the apostles are mostly indicated by the word *discipulus*. In art, they are distinguished from other characters by their clothes (they wear a *tunica*, sometimes with *clavi*, a *pallium* and sandals) and their position near Christ. Often they have a *volumen* as an attribute.⁸ Although they may have different facial features, these are not so precise as to indicate which apostle is meant (cf. 2.1.2)—other than to indicate the apostles Peter and Paul (see 2.2.2.3.2)—and only few objects remain on which the names of the apostles are written.⁹ In early Christian art before the fifth century, characters who were not connected to Biblical stories were not often depicted.¹⁰

The (few) references to the ‘minor apostles’ (i.e. apostles other than Peter and Paul) almost exclusively come from poetry. They include texts that mention the apostles as writers of authoritative texts. A similar idea is in early Christian art reflected by the fixed attribute of a scroll. An exceptional representation of an apostle other than Peter and Paul is John’s vocation (cf. Philip converting the eunuch). It is depicted only once. Some sarcophagi show Thomas’ disbelief. Judas is the only apostle other than Peter and Paul who is depicted more often, although just two different Judas scenes entered the repertoire of Christian art: his betrayal (in the context of the story of Jesus’ death) and his suicide. Only Judas’ betrayal was depicted already before the end of the fourth century.

8 Therefore, it is unlikely that the vocation of some of the apostles is visualised in a scene on Rep3 42, because the figures there are dressed with a *paenula* and shoes instead of a *pallium* and sandals: see Christern-Briesenick (2003) 30 for a discussion of the sarcophagus.

9 See e.g. Buschhausen (1971) 181–90, B3 (reliquary), also discussed in Baraka (2009). The ICA mentions some other examples of busts of the apostles John, Philip, Simon and Thomas, mostly on gold glasses. The dating is insecure: ICA 0⁴90636, 0⁴91323, 10³100693. Cf. also the Sant’Aquilino chapel and Rep2 366, which are both discussed below.

10 On gold glasses busts of martyrs are sometimes depicted, see Grig (2004), p. 219 in particular. Cf. also the exceptional case of a sarcophagus showing scenes from the *Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis* (S1400): Fontaine (1974) 297–8.

Some scenes of Peter in art are not found in poetry: the foot-washing, the story of Ananias and Sapphira and the raising of Tabitha.¹¹ They are all dated in the last quarter of the fourth century and mainly occur on sarcophagi. Paul was less popular in art than Peter. His status as intellectual among the apostles and his connection to writing and learning is confirmed by the fact that no image survives that does depict a (canonical) story or an aspect from his life that is not found in poetry.

Several entries in the table in appendix 2 are of a symbolical rather than a narrative nature seem less suitable for visualisation. However, they deserve mention, since some of the notions they contain were included in other, narrative scenes in art. One example is the depiction of Peter as ‘rock of the Church’ in Christian poetry. Although this is nowhere depicted as such, his prominent position among the apostles and his depiction in images with Christ alone (often accompanied by Paul, who is also exalted by his position, cf. in poetry for example the references to him as “a vessel of divine election”) is a reflection of the same idea. The rock on which Peter is seated in some depictions of the reading scene might also refer to Peter’s special status (see 2.2.2.1.3). The idea of Peter as gatekeeper of heaven (the *traditio clavium* scene based on Matt 16.19) was easier to visualise than that of Peter as the rock of the Church and might therefore have been chosen as an alternative scene to refer to Peter’s special position. In poetry, Peter is referred to as a gatekeeper, but poets did not elaborate on this image.¹² The prophecy of Peter’s future sufferings, his vision in Joppa and his miracle at the *porta speciosa* occur in poetry but were not depicted. The last scene especially seems appropriate for a funeral context and could have had as an example the depictions of Jesus’ miracles, but Peter’s role as thaumaturge was restricted in early Christian art (both his raising of Tabitha and his punishment of Ananias and Sapphira were depicted on few sarcophagi only). The same can be said about Paul: only one miracle performed by him is mentioned in poetry (exorcism on a slave), but it has never been used in art.

The stories of the conflict of Peter and Paul in Antioch, the discord in the congregation at Corinth and Paul persecuting Christians—all mentioned in poetry—were of course not likely to be depicted, since the events had a negative connotation that was possibly explained away by words, but difficultly so in a visual context. Moreover, early Christian art showed a tendency to emphasise the unity of Peter and Paul. Other poetical references have a rather vague Biblical background (Peter and Paul giving to the poor, Paul suffering during

11 It is unlikely that the depiction of the so-called “Apparition to Peter” should be interpreted as such, see 2.1.3.1.2.

12 Arator will do so in his epic of Acts in the sixth century, see Deproost (1990) 150–5.

lifetime), are of little importance for the figure of the apostle in the mainly Western context of Christian art (Peter's bond with Mark and Jerusalem or Paul earning his own living), or only refer to dogmatic issues, which are difficult to visualise in a direct way (e.g. the condemnation of inebriety and exuberance). Furthermore, most art was not primarily used to transmit theological doctrine beyond grand themes such as the Trinity or the importance of baptism.

Some scenes remain that are mentioned considerably more often in poetry than in art, especially Peter's endeavour to walk on the waves (mentioned particularly often by Prudentius, but also by Paulinus and ps.-Claudian) and Paul's conversion. The former case is the more peculiar one, since it is the scene used for the first depiction of Peter known to us, in the house church of Dura Europos. The appearance of this scene in one of the outer regions of the Empire can either mean that it was so well-known that it arrived even there, or that it was an exceptional outburst of creativity of a particular community or individual, maybe inspired by the fact that no examples of decoration programmes in baptisteries were available. The complete lack of remains of interiors of house churches from the first centuries—although there is evidence for the existence of a considerable number of them in this period—makes it difficult to contextualise the Syrian image. However, it is remarkable that this appealing story (one of the stories about apostles that are most often mentioned in poetry) appears only twice thereafter in Christian art (some other instances are debated). Moreover, the story is not among the remaining images of interiors of baptisteries. Paul's conversion was mentioned by several authors at the end of the fourth century, but there is no undisputed depiction left. However, we do know that it had a place in the cycle with scenes of the life of Paul in the basilica of Saint Paul.¹³

The group of (twelve) apostles was frequently depicted. In art, the group is sometimes abbreviated to only one or a few apostles, meant to represent the twelve. In many cases, one or more disciples appear as bystanders and witnesses of miracles performed by Christ. In poetry a similar phenomenon can be seen in the epic of Juvenius in particular. Depictions of narrative scenes in which the apostles play a more prominent role are limited in number. Two scenes are found in art only: the washing of feet¹⁴ and the apostles with Christ

13 Cf. Dassmann (1982) 30: "Erstaunlicherweise hat auch das einschneidendste Ereignis im Leben des Paulus, seine Bekehrung vor Damaskus, in der christlichen Frühzeit kaum künstlerische Betrachtung gefunden." For the San Paolo basilica see e.g. Waetzoldt (1964) and Garber (1918), especially pp. 12–16 and "Plan I" and "Plan II" for the cycle of Paul.

14 However, in each case only one apostle is present and seems rather to be depicted as a witness, not participating in the scene devoted to Peter and Christ, than as representation

in Gethsemane. These scenes all date from the end of the fourth century and appear mainly on sarcophagi, but occasionally on other materials (e.g. the Ascension on a diptych).

The miracles performed by the apostles after the Ascension were never depicted, since the apostles as individual thaumaturges were no topic in early Christian art, except for Peter (Paul only once, on the Carrand diptych). The scenes of Jesus forecasting his own death and teaching the apostles after his Resurrection are not depicted as such, but depictions of Christ teaching the apostles are widespread. Among these, the Great Commission (Matt 28.16–20) has sometimes been detected, but is in most cases hard to distinguish from general teaching scenes. However, on the sarcophagus of Stilicho, the double depiction of the twelve apostles with Christ seems to be meant as the Great Commission (on the front, with the sheep to whom they would preach) and a teaching scene.¹⁵ The *Dominus legem dat* scene mainly expresses the power and veracity of Christ's words (see 2.2.2.3.1).

It might seem surprising that the Ascension, one of the feast days generally celebrated in the Christian world, is not depicted and mentioned more often, but the feast of the Ascension was not celebrated before the end of the fourth century and—maybe even more important—not before the middle of the fifth century in Rome, the centre of art production as well as the main place of orientation for literary men in late antiquity.¹⁶ A similar situation should be envisaged for the feast day of Whitsun, which is only mentioned by Paulinus and was never depicted.¹⁷

Gregory of Nazianzus' remark about the apostles' lack of education (II,1,12 192–205) has never been translated into art: on the contrary, their depiction as philosophers and the scroll as their attribute rather suggest the reverse. Another case in point are the early images of Christ surrounded by six apostles: it is obvious that all apostles are meant to be represented, but the abbreviated representation of six of them (with Christ) referred to the famous seven sages of antiquity.¹⁸ Biblical information about the apostles' lack of education had to

of the group of the other apostles; Rep1 58 (fig. 34) does not even show other figures than Christ and Peter.

15 Katzenellenbogen (1947). Another sarcophagus on which the group of the twelve apostles is shown twice is Rep1 678, see 2.1.2.

16 See LThK 5 s.v. Himmelfahrt III. Liturgisch (Franz). Contrary to Latin authors, Greek writers considered Constantinople as a central spot, but the majority of the authors mentioning the apostles consists of the former.

17 See 1.11.2 above.

18 De Bruyne (1969) 40–2.

be explained carefully to emphasise its positive aspects, and was clearly too difficult to visualise.

Apart from eschatological overtones of the *Dominus legem dat* scene and other scenes of Christ and the apostles, the Dumberton Oaks Collection has a terracotta plaque that seems to show Christ and his apostles at the Last Judgement. The depiction of a crowd makes it likely that the scene is not a common teaching scene.¹⁹ A direct link between the apostles and the heavenly Jerusalem, such as the one found in Prudentius' *Psychomachia* (the names of the apostles inscribed on its foundations) was not visualised in art. In his *Dittochaeon*, Prudentius mentions two Old Testament stories which he explains in a typological way as referring to the apostles. The attribute of Old Testament prophets, the *rotulus*, was the attribute of the apostles too (see 2.1.2). Gregory of Nazianzus probably established a link between the patriarchs and the apostles in his poetry (1.9.1) and Paulinus of Nola also mentions both of them in one verse (1.12.1.1). They are also linked to each other in early Christian art, in the atrium to the Sant'Aquilino chapel in Milan.²⁰ Mosaics of the patriarchs occupy the lower part of the walls; above, two walls show images of martyrs and two others depictions of the apostles. The mosaics are heavily damaged, but the names of Matthew, John, Philip and Bartholomew are still (partly) legible.²¹ The decoration shows the status of the apostles as leaders of the 'new Israel' and as martyr saints (cf. e.g. gold glasses with Peter, Paul and other martyrs, see 2.2.2.3.3).

2.1.2 *The Anonymous Apostles as Witnesses and Pupils*

The quantitatively most significant category of depictions of the apostles is that of anonymous apostles who do not have a role in a narrative scene. Two major sub categories of depictions of the apostles can be distinguished: depictions of a group of apostles (not necessarily twelve in number) and depictions of one or a few apostles as secondary characters.

Especially on sarcophagi, miracles performed by Christ are often depicted: it was hoped that Christ would be equally merciful to the deceased as he had been towards the sick whom he met on earth.²² These miracles are attended

19 See the image in Brown (2006) 106–7 (*fig.* 77).

20 See Calderini, Chierici et al. (1951) 233–42. Cf. Bovini (1970) 310–21: p. 320 for a similar, but lost, decoration with apostles, martyrs and patriarchs from the fifth century. The Sant'Aquilino probably functioned as a mausoleum for the emperor Gratian, see Johnson (2009) 167.

21 Bagnoli (1950) 24 also reads the names of James of Alphaeus and Judas Zelotes.

22 Cf. Caillet (1993) 132: "(...) l'accumulation de ces images vise à inciter le Seigneur à autant de compassion à l'égard du défunt."

by one or more anonymous men, who do not have a clear function in the scene. These men look like apostles and are probably indeed meant to represent them. This is in accordance with the Biblical account of Jesus' life, since he travelled through Judea accompanied by his disciples.

In most of the events described in the gospels, the disciples only play a minor role, but they are often present. Sometimes they interfere in the story or contribute to its development, most clearly in the story of the multiplication of loaves and fishes, where the disciples collect what food there is among the crowd and distribute it after Christ's benediction (Matt 14.15–21 and 15.32–9); in the Gospel of John, Philip and Andrew are mentioned by name (John 6.5–9). This miracle is often shown on early Christian sarcophagi:²³ in most cases, Christ is standing, distributing filled baskets among two apostles on his sides, while more baskets are depicted in front of them. The scene was especially popular because it was interpreted as referring to the Eucharist.²⁴ Other miracles in which the apostles actively participated (and which occur in early Christian art) are the raising of Lazarus (the apostles point to the dangers of going to Lazarus and show their incomprehension of Jesus' words: John 11.7–16), the healing of the man born blind (the disciples ask Jesus who had sinned: the man or his parents, John 9.2) and the cure of a bleeding woman (the disciples wonder how Jesus could have felt that the woman touched him, Mark 5.31). However, a specific interference of the apostles is never depicted, even if some apostles are added to the scene. Similarly, poets were perfectly capable of describing Christ's miracles without even mentioning the apostles, cf. e.g. Prudentius *apoth.* 646–781, discussing Jesus walking on the waves, the healing of a blind man, the multiplication of loaves and fishes and the raising of Lazarus.

The raising of the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5.22–43; Luke 8.41–56) is another example: since in this case it is known which apostles were present, i.e. Peter, John and James (Mark 5.27; Luke 8.51), this case shows that details of the presence of the apostles were of minor importance to the designers of scenes in early Christian art: two, three or four, six, or nine and three apostles respectively are depicted on the four sarcophagi that depict this story.²⁵ The disciples

23 The scene frequently appears in the middle of the sarcophagus front, probably because Jesus' pose was similar to that of the *orans* who in most cases occupied that place until the Constantinian period, cf. Deckers (1996) 146. See Provoost (2011a) 138 (2b²) for a list of miracles performed by Christ that are depicted in early Christian art.

24 Cf. TIP 220–1 s.v. *Moltiplicazione dei pani* (Mazzei).

25 Rep1 7: two (if these figures are apostles at all); Rep2 10: four (or maybe three; the fourth man could be Jairus, who was present according to Mark 5.40 and Luke 8.51, see Benoit

do not contribute to the miracle as such, but at least it is sure that they were present at the event. In some Biblical stories, the apostles do not play an active role, but are explicitly said to be present: the miracle of turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana (John 2.1–11, presence mentioned in John 2.2) and the raising of the young man from Nain (Luke 7.11–5, see 7.11).

Several other miracles performed by Jesus are described in the Bible without any sign of the apostles' presence, i.e. they are not mentioned in the description of the scene, nor in that of another event described immediately before or afterwards, which takes place around the same time and/or in the same place (in as far as it is possible to deduce this information from the often rather lacunose Biblical account): this is, for instance, the case in the description of the healing at the pool of Bethesda (John 5.1–18).

In other cases it is unclear whether the Biblical narrative implies that the the disciples are present or not: the healing of the centurion's servant in Capernaum (Matt 8.5–13; Luke 7.1–10: the miracle takes places after the Sermon on the Mount, where the audience is not specified, but might consist of the apostles), the cleansing of a leper (Matt 8.1–4 and other synoptists, same ambiguity as in the foregoing case) and the healing of an infirm woman (Luke 13.11–3).

Christ is also depicted healing a blind man, for which three different stories exist in the New Testament (not including his healing of two blind men in Matt 9.27–31): healing the blind man at Bethesda (Mark 8.22–36), healing a man who is deaf, possessed and blind (Matt 12.22) and healing a man born blind (John 9.6–7), already mentioned. The healings are distinguished by the way the blind is treated: Jesus lays saliva on the eyes (Mark 8.23), touches them (Matt 9.29), or makes mud to put on the eyes (John 9.11).²⁶ Jesus healing a paralytic could refer to the story described by the synoptists (Matt 9.27–31 and corresponding passages; apostles possibly present) or his miracle at the pool of Bethesda (no hint regarding the presence of the apostles). In art, it is often difficult to decide which scene is depicted because of the lack of details: in most of the cases, scenes are placed in an undefined environment, an a-historical setting.²⁷

(1954) 50); Rep3 32 (fig. 28): six, with three figures in the background; Rep1 13: three. Rep2 218 might represent Jairus begging Christ to save his child, in the presence of two women, without apostles.

26 The way of curing in Matt 12.22 is not described.

27 Whenever a city is carved out in the background of sarcophagi, the architectural elements do not refer to a historical city, but rather to a transcendental place (e.g. the heavenly Jerusalem), see Mazzei (2002) 1896.

Although the disciples were not necessarily present at all miracles represented in art and—more importantly—although the writers of the Biblical accounts often did not feel the need to explicitly mention their presence, most miracles of Christ are depicted with one or more apostles at the side of Christ. They function as witnesses of the event, who testify its truthfulness and proclaim it to later generations. This idea is explicitly mentioned in the Bible in Luke 10.23: *Καὶ στραφεὶς πρὸς τοὺς μαθητάς κατ' ἰδίαν εἶπεν· μακάριοι οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ οἱ βλέποντες ἃ βλέπετε.*²⁸

At the same time, the apostle witnesses function as markers that separate different scenes on one object or in one field of decoration.²⁹ In scenes depicting an event where the apostles were not present, comparable figures appear: e.g. two men in the scene of the creation of Eve on Rep3 38 (fig. 3), interpreted as angels, or two men with Daniel in the lion's den on the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus.³⁰ The enigmatic figure in a depiction of the water miracle on the sarcophagus of Marcia Romania Celsa probably has to be explained likewise.³¹

On most sarcophagi, the apostle witnesses do not have a beard. However, a desire for variation sometimes affects this standard depiction: it is revealed in the alternate depiction of apostles with and without beard and/or with an opened or closed scroll as an attribute. In general, there was a certain freedom in the way these figures were represented,³² because of the fact that they were only of minor importance for the composition as a whole. The apostles function as bystanders, witnesses and companions of Christ rather than as independently acting characters of interest in art and poetry alike. Apostles other than Peter and Paul are of little importance, and even the *principes apostolorum* do not appear (as individuals) in the first examples of art and poetry: Peter appears in the Constantinian period (mainly on sarcophagi and in the epic

28 Luke 10.23: "Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see." Luke 10.24 continues: "For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it." The passage is referred to by Hahn (2012) 52. Cf. Ficker (1887) 71, the only author—to my knowledge—to have extensively treated the apostles as witnesses in art, especially on pp. 70–81.

29 Ficker (1887) 71.

30 About Rep3 38 see Christern-Briesenick (2003) 23: "Engel?" (two examples). For the scene on the Junius Bassus sarcophagus see e.g. Mönnich (1990) 87–8, linking it (indirectly) to a poem of Dracontius; cf. also fig. 41.

31 Rep3 37, see e.g. Van Moorsel (1980). An interpretation of the scene as the depiction of the conversion of Cornelius—mentioned by Caillet (1993) 132—seems unlikely.

32 Ficker (1887) 70–81. From the fifth century onwards, apostle witnesses often have a beard, see p. 73.

of Juvenicus), Paul around the middle of the fourth century in art, in poetry slightly later (in the last quarter of the fourth century, cf. Damasus). Proba also testifies to this phenomenon: apart from the fact that she pays little attention to the apostles, she also makes them disappear behind (mainly) the companions of Aeneas due to her choice of the cento form. Moreover, it is difficult to distinguish the apostles from any other character at all in her cento.

Analogous to the apostle witnesses, some scenes in art (from the Old as well as from the New Testament) depict even more men in the background. Often only the heads are visible. They are sometimes difficult to distinguish from the apostles, but in most cases they are carved out in low relief compared to the apostle-witnesses. A good example is the so-called Concordius-sarcophagus (fig. 4), where these witnesses appear behind the apostles surrounding Christ (fig. 5).³³ They have been appropriately qualified as “apostelartige Hintergrundgestalten”.³⁴ These figures seem to reflect a kind of Christian *horror vacui* and maybe aim at showing the popularity of Christianity among the populace. In poetry, Paulinus expresses this idea in his catalogue of pilgrims in *carmen* 14,55–79.

While the apostles’ witnessing of Christ’s miracles contributes to the exaltation of Christ, they are also depicted explicitly honouring their master (cf. figs. 8 and 39).³⁵

Often the apostles appear in a role in which they are more clearly meant to be recognised as exalted servants of Christ than in their function as apostle witnesses: as pupils of their master Christ.³⁶ The scene of Christ teaching amidst

33 Benoit (1954) 35 (no. 4): he describes the figures as “serviteurs”. The sarcophagus is now more conveniently found as Rep3 65. Comparable examples are e.g. Rep3 429 or Rep3 38.

34 Qualification by Deckers (1996) 159 (without further discussion of the figures), referring to the same Concordius-sarcophagus. Depictions in this manner were common in late antique art in general, see Cutler (1998) 14. Sometimes, only a spatial function is attributed to them, see e.g. Giess (1962) 45, discussing Rep3 412: “Die Büste eines bärtigen Apostels im Hintergrund gibt der Gruppe ihre räumliche Geschlossenheit.” But the scene seems to be ‘closed’ already without the apostle. Giess’s lack of interest in these figures is reflected by his elaborate index with all elements of the scene of the foot washing, except for the background-figure, see *ibid.* 38–41.

35 This is probably also the meaning of a gold glass which shows a bust of Christ surrounded by the twelve apostles in the Museo archeologica nazionale di Parma, see <<http://www.numismaticadellostato.it/web/pns/patrimonio/vetrine/parma/galleria-fotografica?codMuseo=4>>, accessed June 2015.

36 Cf. Steen (2001) 289, discussing the sarcophagus of Stilicho in the S. Ambrogio (see fig. 10–1): “The relationship between Christ and the Apostles as represented in Early Christian art, is above all the relationship between teacher and pupil, or master and disciple.”

his apostles appears in an early stage of Christian art.³⁷ Two types of this scene can be distinguished: either Christ is seated and the apostles are standing around him or all are seated, which is most common.³⁸ The scene appears in most categories of art: catacomb paintings, sarcophagi, ivories, reliquaries made of different materials and apse mosaics. There is even a remarkable example on a large crater from the second half of the fourth century (fig. 7).³⁹ The limited space on gold glasses probably prevented the depiction of this scene on these objects. By contrast, the shape of a church apse was particularly suitable for the scene. The most ancient remaining example is that of the Santa Pudenziana in Rome, where the scene has transcendental overtones (fig. 8).⁴⁰ In a church apse the apostles as students of Christ mirrored the higher clergy, sitting in the apse: all faithful could see the connection between ecclesiastical hierarchy and the promulgation of the divine message.⁴¹ An example contemporary to that of Santa Pudenziana is the chapel of Sant'Aquilino in Milan (fig. 9), originally built either as a mausoleum or a baptistery. Here, as in other examples e.g. in the catacombs, a *capsella* with scrolls is depicted in the foreground to enhance the intellectual character of the scene, which is of course already indicated by the venerable dress of the figures, the scrolls in the hands of the apostles and the book held by Christ.⁴² In this case, the apostles all look different, which shows the Sant'Aquilino mosaic to be part of the development towards greater distinction between the different apostles. Nevertheless, only Peter and Paul are recognisable as such, by their well-defined features.⁴³

For the sarcophagus of Stilicho see also Katzenellenbogen (1947), who provides a detailed interpretation. At times he seems to ascribe too many details to the influence of early Christian exegesis. The *akroteria* of the lid are certainly not depicting the head of Christ (as Katzenellenbogen states on p. 254).

37 Cf. for this scene Uggeri (2010) 103–35. Examples of sarcophagi in Koch (2000) 190–1.

38 See Uggeri (2010) 103–26.

39 See Sena Chiesa (2012) cat. no. 195 (description by Slavazzi). The original function of the crater is unknown.

40 Due to the (heavy) restoration works in the sixteenth century not all apostles are visible anymore: the names accompanying them also disappeared due to the restoration, see Uggeri (2010) 111 and Hellemo (1989) 19.

41 See Brenk (2011) 113.

42 The *capsella* is also a direct reference to philosophical images, see Uggeri (2010) 108.

43 On an exceptional pyxis from Berlin, Peter and Paul are also distinguished because they are seated on simple stools, while the other apostles are standing and Christ is seated on a throne. It has been suggested that the pyxis was somehow related to Ambrose, see Cagiano de Azevedo (1963) 68–9.

In general, the number of apostles in this kind of scenes depends on the form of or space on the object.⁴⁴

These and other learning scenes do not have a clear equivalent in poetry, although the concept obviously has a Biblical background in the manifold conversations of Christ and his disciples. Christians could see in the disciples examples of other pupils of Christ, trying to understand his doctrine. Occasionally, people were depicted among the disciples and thus included in the group of the twelve. The famous sarcophagus of Stilicho from Milan (Rep2 150, fig. 10–2) might offer an example on one of its short sides: a man included in a group of three apostles, but distinguished by his dress could represent the commissioner of the sarcophagus.⁴⁵ Similarly, apostles or figures that looked like apostles were depicted on sarcophagi flanking the deceased or an *orans*. A plaque of African Red Slip Ware has Peter and Paul and a consul in between. It might have been a gift from the consul Bassus and an expression of the support of the apostles for his policy.⁴⁶ On a *scrinium* or *arca* (i.e. a small box) from Pannonia two figures having the features of Peter and Paul are depicted, with some miracle scenes of Christ and heads of Gorgons.⁴⁷ Other examples include depictions of apostles and the muses.⁴⁸

The most elaborate Biblical passage in which Christ acts as a teacher is the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7). He addresses the apostles and other people. This passage was versified by Juvenius and Proba. Although it never became a popular scene, it has occasionally been depicted, probably because Christ

44 E.g. on a reliquary found in Nubia but originating in Egypt (Ballana), dated to the years 390–400. It is an octagon with Christ depicted on one side and one apostle on each other side (Peter and Paul are clearly recognisable), see Török (1986). Rep1 678 has 24 apostles, see Provoost (2011c) 375, *pace* Cazes (1993) 66, who counted only 20 apostles.

45 Steen (2001), p. 290 in particular; Deckers (1996) 157; Katzenellenbogen (1947) 252. Dresken-Weiland (1998) 57 refers to him as a man in “Dienstkostüm”. Cf. Rep3 428, where a similar figure is described as “der Grabinhaber mit drie Begleitern” in Christern-Briesenick (2003) 200.

46 See Van den Hoek (2006), esp. 197–204 (p. 203 for the *raison d'être* of the plaque), identifying the consul as Auchenius Bassus 11 and therefore dating the piece to 408. She gives this rather unusual plaque a place in the ecclesiastical debates between catholic and Donatists in North Africa: Bassus was claiming the support of the apostles.

47 See Dinkler-Von Schubert (1979), p. 94 about the function of the *arca*, based on the inscription (which is reconstructed as *VIVAS/VINC(as)*): “Derartige Glückwunschformeln lassen keinen Zweifel über den Verwendungszweck der Kästchen, zu denen die Beschläge gehörten: es waren Geschenke, zu privatem Gebrauch bestimmt, versehen mit einem Wunsche des Gebers.”

48 See RAC 25,212–6 s.v. Musen C 11 (Deckers).

teaching the apostles was already depicted in a different way. The scene of the Sermon on the Mount is distinguished from other scenes of Christ and the apostles by a rock that functions as a seat of Christ, who is surrounded by several men who have to look up to see him. The scene is densely composed.⁴⁹ The clearest example of the scene might be Rep1 773b (fig. 13), which has seven men—seen on the back—listening to a seated Christ.⁵⁰ The people don't look like the apostles, which is in accordance with the Biblical account: the people stay at the foot of the mountain, Christ and his disciples ascent to the top. An apostle witness is standing at Jesus' side, but with his feet on the same level as the listening people. Depicting all apostles as *cingentes Christum*—as Juvenius has it—would not have fit the space available on the sarcophagus. Moreover, Christ needed to be exalted; this is clearly shown by two other examples that have been said to show the Sermon on the Mount: fragment Rep1 110 shows four men looking up to Jesus seated on a rock; Rep3 169 is the only sarcophagus to have twelve men listening to Jesus: all men are standing, Christ is standing on a rock. The lower part of the sarcophagus (from the breast of the six apostles in lower position) has been lost. In these two cases the apostles are depicted. However, especially on the latter sarcophagus, the gestures of the apostles reveal their reverence and awe for Christ rather than their attentive listening, which might indicate that the scene is a (not necessarily historical) homage to Christ and not an image of the Sermon on the Mount.

As an alternative interpretation for several scenes of the Sermon on the Mount that of the *missio apostolorum* (Matt 10.5–10 and especially Matt 28.16–20) has been proposed, but since there is no specific visual element that could confirm this interpretation to the viewer, it seems too precise an interpretation for a more general scene that exalts Christ's teaching and the apostles.⁵¹ A tiny sarcophagus fragment, which is now lost (Rep3 219), has a man sitting with three men (apostles?) and a background figure in front of him. Maybe here

49 Classical teaching scenes have Christ surrounded by all disciples at the same level or nearly so, filling the whole front of a sarcophagus, e.g. the front and back of Rep2 150, where Christ is exalted in a ostentatious way. On the mosaic in the Sant'Aquilino (fig. 9) the seat and *suppedaneum* of Christ change into rocks, cf. Hellemo (1989) 28.

50 Hellemo (1989) 20 considers it a general learning scene (according to him, the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospels offered the "typical setting" for the scene of Christ teaching the apostles). Likewise Stutzinger, Bergmann et al. (1983) 608. The Via Latina catacombs (F246, Provoost (2011) 211) also offers a depiction of the Sermon on the Mount: a crowd is listening to Christ standing on a rock.

51 Wilpert (1929–1936c) 32–46 seems to interpret all scenes in which Christ is standing on a (slight) elevation between apostles other than Peter and Paul as the *missio apostolorum*. He distinguishes two categories: the *missio* in christological cycles and the isolated *missio*.

the *missio* is meant, since to the right of this scene the Ascension seems to be shown.⁵² The apocryphal stories about the missionary regions of the apostles play no role in any of the images that have been interpreted as the *missio apostolorum* but may have contributed to the popularity of the theme.

The two main aspects of Christ's appearance in the gospels, in both of which the apostles play a role, i.e. performing miracles and teaching, are thus represented in art and poetry. However, at the moment that the poetical tradition started to flourish, in the last quarter of the fourth century, the role of the apostles in precisely these two aspects seems to diminish. The genre which was most receptive to these aspects—the Biblical epic—lacked representatives for a while (although Paulinus composed some small-scale Biblical epics among which was his *carmen* 6: a versification of the life of John the Baptist): in the fifth century the genre would be taken up again by (e.g.) Sedulius in Latin and Eudocia in Greek. In other genres, the focus was on Christ alone or on individual saints (Peter and Paul). Proof for Christ's miracles was found in Biblical exempla—especially the prophecies of Old Testament prophets—more than in the presence of the apostles. This proof of veracity by Scripture was not alien to early Christian art. The apostles in scenes of Christ not only functioned as witnesses themselves, but also had a function comparable to that of Biblical references in poetry. The scroll or *rotulus* in the apostles' hands emphasised their intellectual capacities as well as their role as heralds of the divine truth. The Concordius sarcophagus (fig. 4) provides an example of compositions in which the apostles are clearly connected to texts: it does not only show Christ amidst his apostles (with writing attributes) and evangelists as the main scene, but also reading and proclaiming apostles on the *tabula* (fig. 6).⁵³ Maybe the apostles were also felt to witness the truth of Scripture (to which some of them had contributed, see 2.1 for apostolicity as a criterion for canonicity). The *rotulus* not only was an attribute of Christ and his apostles, but also of the prophets.⁵⁴ In this way, the Old and the New Testament were brought together.

52 See Christern-Briesenick (2003) 115–6, who doubts the interpretation of the piece as a *missio apostolorum*. In any case, *missio apostolorum* is not mentioned in the TIP or the LCI: Provoost (2011a) 103 mentions one (problematic) example. The ICA has several examples on sarcophagi from Gaul, Italy and Spain (lemma “Christ: sending out apostles”), probably based on Wilpert (1929–1936c) 32–46. Cf. Kaestli (1981) arguing that it is improbable that lists of all apostles with their missionaries ever existed, as has often been postulated (based on the partial lists in apocryphal texts).

53 Benoit (1954) 35: “(…) les douze apôtres en train de lire la Loi et de déclamer, ayant les *volumina* à leurs pieds.”

54 For the *rotulus* as an attribute in early Christian art, see TIP 274–5 s.v. *rotolo* (Busia), describing it as a “riferimento inequivocabile alla dottrina cristiana” (p. 274). Figures

2.1.3 *Individual Apostles*

Peter and Paul are the apostles who are most often represented as recognisable individuals, both in art and poetry. Although a fair number of different stories about Paul is used in both media, Peter is represented much more often. Especially the so-called Petrine trilogy is frequently depicted in art. Depictions of the other apostles as individuals are rare, reflecting their (slightly more frequent but still rather inconsiderable) occurrence in early Christian poetry.

2.1.3.1 Peter

References to Peter are more abundant—in art and poetry alike—than the references to any other apostle. Apart from remarks about him in doctrinal texts, the number of stories from Peter's life is also relatively large. The corpus of poetry and art partly overlaps, but three stories remain that were used in art, but absent from the poetical repertoire: that of Ananias and Sapphira, the washing of the feet at the Last Supper and the raising of Tabitha. Vice versa, the story of the Transfiguration is the only story about Peter that was referred to by poets, but not used in art before the sixth century.

2.1.3.1.1 *Peter, Christ and the Cock (the Denial)*

The most popular images more specifically devoted to the figure of Peter are traditionally referred to as the Petrine trilogy. Two scenes of the trilogy—Peter's arrest and the water miracle—as well as the fourth scene sometimes added to the trilogy—the reading scene—are not found in the canonical books. They are not mentioned in literature either, although Peter's arrest is of course related to references to his martyrdom (see 2.2.2.1.2).

The only scene of the trilogy for which there is a corresponding Biblical passage is the scene traditionally referred to as Peter's denial (see for an example fig. 14). It has been much discussed.⁵⁵ This scene appears mainly on sarcophagi in the fourth century, mostly in the period 300–330 and—to a lesser extent—330–350.⁵⁶ In the second half of the fourth century, the Petrine trilogy disappears, but the scene of Peter, Christ and the cock (for matters of convenience from now on referred to as “the scene with the cock”) remains part of the

functioning as witnesses in Old Testament scenes are probably meant to be prophets, see Dassmann (1982) 31.

55 See in particular the monograph by Post (1984) and recent discussion in Dresken-Weiland (2011a) 141–4 and Dresken-Weiland (2010) 146–61. Cf. Sotomayor (1962b) 28–51. Post (1984) 2–16 offers an overview of modern studies on the scene up to his time.

56 Post (1984) 62–4.

imagery of early Christian sarcophagi.⁵⁷ In most cases two men are involved, clearly recognisable as Peter and Christ: Peter is standing on the left and Christ on the right. Peter often points to a cock with his left hand and brings his right hand to his mouth. The cock is either standing on the ground or seated on a column or other object.⁵⁸ Christ makes a rhetorical gesture of speech; the gesture of Peter is more difficult to interpret, but indicates a reaction to what happens (or to what is said): as such, it does not help to clarify the meaning of the scene.⁵⁹ The cock is the crucial element of the scene, because it distinguishes the scene from others in which both Peter and Christ participate. It is this element that reminds the viewer of the story of the denial, the only narrative story in the Bible in which a cock is mentioned.⁶⁰ Juvenius in his epic focuses mainly on the historical event. However, the significance of the cock in particular goes beyond this story about Peter. The two other poets mentioning Peter and the cock provide examples hereof: the hymns of Ambrose and Prudentius present the cock as a symbol of time and vigilance (Ambrose, cf. Mark 13.35) and Resurrection (of Christ, Prudentius).⁶¹ These notions also seem to play a role in visual representations.

The story about Peter's denial is remarkable, since it is the most conspicuous case in the Bible of an apostle playing a negative role (apart from the betrayal by Judas). Even more important is the fact that Peter, the head of the other apostles, is involved. Furthermore, the event seems to find a continuation at the end of the Gospel of John, where Christ three times asks Peter whether he loves him before predicting his future (John 21.15–9).

This passage was considered closely connected to that of Peter's denial in (early) Christian exegesis. Peter symbolised the Christian believer who means well, but sometimes acts wrongly (cf. Ambrose hymn 1,15–6 and Prudentius *cath.* 1,49–56). The important and honouring task imposed on Peter by Christ afterwards ("Feed my lambs", "Take care of my sheep", "Feed my sheep" John 21.15; 16; 17) was interpreted as a message of mercy directed towards all

57 Post (1984) 89.

58 Post (1984) 70–77 distinguishes three main types of the scene (divided in several subtypes), but the differences are few. Sotomayor (1962b) 38 distinguishes three types of the scene: his type I and II are basically similar to—albeit less elaborate—Post's first two types of depictions of the scene.

59 Discussion of the gestures in Post (1984) 143–50. Clearly, a situation of interaction between Christ and Peter is suggested.

60 In the Old Testament the cock is mentioned in Job 38.36 (but the Hebrew is ambiguous here and the translation is disputed) and in Proverbs 30.31.

61 Cf. the entries under "Hahn" in LCI 2,206–10 (Gerlach) and LThK 4,1147–8 (Jászai).

humankind. As a result, both Ambrose and Prudentius tried to exonerate Peter in their poetry.

As a reference to the Bible, the scene with the cock is ambiguous. In modern scholarship, there seems to be consensus on interpreting the scene as more than the depiction of the denial only.⁶² Three Biblical passages are possibly alluded to: the prediction of the denial (the cock was not present there, but it could be depicted proleptically), the denial proper (but Christ was not present at the denial), or the passage in John 21 (the cock actually being out of place, indicating an event that happened in the past). The scene seems to be a kind of visual summary of these passages. Besides as a reference to the prediction of the denial and the confession of Peter at the Sea of Galilee, other, more symbolical interpretations of the scene with the cock have also been proposed.

In metaphorical interpretations of the scene the cock plays a role that is no less crucial than in more historical interpretations. First, it could symbolise Christ's Resurrection. An interpretation of the scene in which Christ is the central figure would better account for the fact that the scene of the cock was deemed important enough to give it a place in the centre of the decoration field on a growing number of sarcophagi in the second half of the fourth century (the emphasis on Christ is a feature of early Christian art in general).⁶³ The reference to Christ's Resurrection allegedly was supported by the surrounding images of the scene with the cock: the scene of Jesus healing a blind man is often depicted in an adjacent position.⁶⁴ This scene was interpreted symbolically as Christ showing people the right faith and raising them from their spiritual blindness. Another way to represent this idea was raising someone from spiritual death, mainly symbolised by the scene of the raising of Lazarus. These two scenes are indeed juxtaposing the scene with the cock on sarcophagi in most cases: Christ raising someone is depicted 35 times next to the scene with the cock, the healing of a blind man 34 times.⁶⁵

The depiction of Christ opposes a purely symbolical 'reading' of the scene. It has been correctly noted that Christ has a beard in hieratic, symbolical scenes on contrast with historical miracle scenes. In the scene with the cock, Christ

62 Cf. Sotomayor (1962b) 37.

63 Simultaneously with the arrival of the *Dominus legem dat* and *traditio clavium* scene in a central position of the front register, the scene with the cock also started to be depicted there. Presupposing a direct link seems to be exaggerated, see Post (1984) 92–5. Post's sketch of the development of the scene of the cock that fades away ("vervaagt", id. 95) into the *Dominus legem dat* scene is not very clear.

64 See e.g. Post (1984) 163.

65 Numbers in Dresken-Weiland (2010) 158.

has no beard, thus suggesting that it is a historical scene.⁶⁶ The difference in frequency of the miracle scenes of Christ mentioned above (healing the blind man and raising the dead), with the third and fourth most frequently depicted scenes next to the scene with the cock, is negligibly small. Both scenes are part of the Petrine trilogy, in which the works and deeds of the apostle are a central motive: the arrest of Peter (30 times) and the water miracle (29).⁶⁷

After 350, when the use of the scene with the cock continued, albeit separately from the Petrine trilogy, Christ might have become more central in the interpretation of the scene. However, the reference to the story of the denial, its prediction and aftermath was still caught. The survival of the scene might also show the popularity and fame of the historical event, described in the gospels, in contrast with especially the rather obscure (apocryphal) story of the water miracle and the (symbolical?) reading scene of Peter (see 2.2.2.1.1 and 2.2.2.1.3).

Only two catacomb paintings with the scene of the cock survive: one in the Commodilla catacombs is depicted in a grave with decoration inspired by the imagery of sarcophagi (including a depiction of the water miracle), another in the Ciriaca catacombs is surrounded by scenes that are not attested on sarcophagi.⁶⁸

Apart from the sarcophagi and the catacombs, the scene has also been depicted on other objects, but only once in the fourth century. On the famous casket from Brescia (the Lipsanoteca, fig. 15–6), the decoration is unusual in more than one aspect.⁶⁹ The scene on the lid of the Lipsanoteca (fig. 16) is undisputedly historical since it has a unique depiction of a woman standing in front of and pointing to a man with the features of Peter who look embarrassed. A cock on a column is depicted next to Peter. The cock ensures that the woman is to be identified with the servant revealing Peter's identity mentioned in Matt 26.69–72 (cf. Juvenius *evang.* 4,570; 575).⁷⁰ Moreover, the scene is included in a cycle showing several events from the story of the Passion in chronological

66 Post (1984) 133–5 describes the development of the figure of Christ and his growing importance in the depiction of the scene with the cock, but does not clearly discuss the reason for the beardless depiction of Christ in the scene, which he interprets in a symbolical way.

67 Numbers in Dresken-Weiland (2010) 158.

68 Dresken-Weiland (2010) 158–61.

69 Post (1984) 43–53 mentions ten monuments outside the field of sculpture, but they exceed the time frame of early Christian art. Apart from the Lipsanoteca (p. 44–5), he mentions only two other monuments dated close to the fourth century (pp. 45–6): an ivory now in the British Museum (Volbach (1952²) no. 116) and one in the Louvre (id. no. 121), both from the fifth century.

70 Cf. Kalinowski (2011) 171, discussing the Lipsanoteca on pp. 168–74.

order (the prayer in Gethsemane, Jesus' arrest, Peter's betrayal and—on the second row—Christ before Caiaphas and Pilate washing his hands). Although it is a unique piece, the casket testifies to the acknowledgement of the denial as a significant episode within the story of Christ's Passion at the end of the fourth century, even if the story had a minor place in patristic considerations of the figure of Peter.⁷¹

The meaning of the cock as a symbol of resurrection and the prominent position of Christ in the scene with the cock was surely noticed by the ancient viewer of the scenes. The scene does not exactly correspond to a Biblical text, but the image of Peter, Christ and a cock probably first of all reminded the viewer of the well-known story of Peter's denial, including its prediction and continuation in John 21. This first impression was supported by the fact that Christ was beardless as in other historical scenes. Other, more symbolical meanings of the scene would probably quickly be noticed, especially for those who had a good knowledge of Christian doctrine.⁷² But the symbolic meaning of the cock in classical culture also played a role.⁷³ It does not seem fruitful to impose one strict interpretation on this complex scene, which has been depicted in large numbers and in different contexts.⁷⁴

Both the historical use of the story of Peter's denial in Juvenius and the more symbolic interpretation by Ambrose and Prudentius are thus represented in early Christian art. The cock presented together with Christ and Peter was a reference to an important historical event, but also had symbolical overtones in the Christian culture of late antiquity of which poetry and art were part.

71 Post (1984) 136–42. Post emphasises the Petrine character of the scene on the Lipsanoteca (p. 169): at the same time, however, the scene is included in an entirely Christological context.

72 Dresken-Weiland (2010) 162 arrives at a similar conclusion. Sotomayor (1962b) emphasises the importance of the passage in John 21 for the interpretation of the scene, but also admits that the story of the denial was naturally called to mind (pp. 46–7).

73 Cf. the literature mentioned in 1.6.3.

74 Post (1984) 24–42 has a catalogue of images with the scene, including lost examples and images of uncertain interpretation (total number 121). Dresken-Weiland (2010) 158 (note 327) mentions 76 sarcophagi. Sotomayor (1962b) 28–30 discusses, among other things, an interpretation of the scene depending on one exceptional sarcophagus (called “of the three monograms”) where Peter and Christ have a scroll with the Christogram as an attribute. However, the scroll—appearing more often, but without Christogram, in the scene—does not seem to affect the interpretation of the scene with the cock, but has to be interpreted as a general sign of learning. In the same way, the *uirga* that Peter has as an attribute presents him as a thaumaturge, without necessarily depicting him while performing a miracle.

2.1.3.1.2 *Traditio clavium*

After the scene of the denial, the so-called *traditio clavium* (fig. 17) is the most popular canonical scene with Peter which appears in poetry and art alike. It refers to the Biblical passage of Matt 16.13–9. The keys of Peter appear relatively late in art: the first depiction of the *traditio clavium* is on a sarcophagus from around 370 (Rep1 200). The scene (nearly) always appears on sarcophagi.⁷⁵ Peter was not depicted as a figure on his own holding the keys as attributes before the fifth century. Sotomayor has shown that the *traditio clavium* is often depicted close to scenes referring to Christ's Resurrection.⁷⁶ Most conspicuously is its juxtaposition to the scene with the cock: six out of a total number of ten complete sarcophagi with the *traditio clavium* scene.⁷⁷ Sotomayor concluded, also on the basis of late antique *testimonia*, that both scenes express the power of Peter (and with him the other apostles and their successors, the bishops, who lead the Church) to pardon the sins of men and open heaven to them. At the same time, the *traditio clavium* is meant to praise God's mercy.⁷⁸ The scene appears both on sarcophagi found in Rome and in Gaul: it probably

75 But see Sotomayor (1962a) 71, catalogue number 397: a silver vase, probably from Rome, dated around the year 400. The vase is damaged exactly on the spot of the keys. It is succinctly described by Tonnochy (1952). Sotomayor also mentions a possible painting of the *traditio clavium* found *ad catacumbas*, although its description does not mention any key (see id. 246, Ap. 143: "Apenas quedan trazas visibles"). The keys on a mosaic in the Santa Costanza (fig. 48) are a restoration and the interpretation of the scene is a matter of heavy debate, as illustrated by Ciancio (2002), who interprets the scene as God giving the law to Moses (similarly Tristan (1996) 418–9), on the basis of an exegetical remark by Eusebius. His hypothesis is heavily criticised in the discussion printed with the article, see id. pp. 1911–6. Cf. Rasch & Arbeiter (2007) 109–15 on the restorations of the remaining mosaics in the Santa Costanza. They also provide a presentation of the elements that are (presumably) authentic, see id. pp. 114–5 about the *traditio clavium* scene.

76 Among which only the *crux invicta* scene is a direct representation of the Resurrection; the Samaritan woman at the well and the *Dominus legem dat* are also interpreted as referring to the Resurrection by Sotomayor (1962a) 72–3.

77 Sotomayor (1962a) 73 discusses 10 sarcophagi that are almost entirely extant. Six other *traditio clavium* scenes have been preserved only in fragments.

78 Sotomayor (1962a) 72–80. Cf. Rasch & Arbeiter (2007) 147 on the *traditio clavium* scene in the Santa Costanza: "Das Mosaik in S. Costanza ist anscheinend vor allem als eine schon von der Baudisposition her geforderte, dabei jedoch ikonologisch nicht voll komplementäre, inhaltlich vergleichsweise banale und kompositorisch recht defizitäre Erwiderung auf das *Dominus-legem-dat*-Thema zu verstehen, die ohne jedes hier kaum denkbar wäre." I hope to publish some further thoughts on the representation of Peter as gatekeeper of heaven in the proceedings of the conference *The Door of the Sanctuary* (held May 2015), forthcoming with Brill.

reflects the growing awareness of the importance of the Roman Church and the effects of the attempts by the Roman see to convince Christians outside Rome of its eminent position. The same reason lies behind the representation of the scene in poetry: after the versification by Juvenius, it appears in Damasus, Gregory of Nazianzus, Prudentius and ps.-Ausonius. Damasus and Prudentius mention the doors of heaven (*ianuas*) instead of the keys, but the idea is the same.

The difference between historical and symbolical representations is less pertinent here, since the Biblical passage on which the representations are based is metaphorical in itself. The popularity of the scene in art at the end of the fourth century seems to fit in with the particular veneration of Peter and the wide use of the *Dominus legem dat* scene (see 2.2.2.3.1) in that period.⁷⁹

2.1.3.1.3 *Peter on the Waves*

The depiction Peter's attempt to walk on the waves towards Christ (Matt 14.28–32) is the first depiction that we know of this apostle. The scene is depicted in a Christian baptistery, found in the oldest Christian house church of which significant traces—including decoration—remain: the house church in Dura Europos, modern Syria. The scene therefore testifies to the fame of Peter in the most remote parts of the empire. Only part of the original decoration has been preserved, including the damaged image of Peter. It is depicted next to a canopied water basin. The scene is composed of three main elements (fig. 18): a ship with passengers in the background (high on the image), a man standing in the forefront and another man depicted a bit higher next to him. It is difficult to recognise features and details on this wall-painting. The garments of the person on the left (*tunica* and *pallium*) correspond to that of Christ healing a paralysed man depicted next to the scene and the garments of the person on the right (*tunica* only) correspond to that of the people in the boat: it has therefore convincingly been argued that the left person is Christ and the person on the right is Peter.⁸⁰ The men in the boat are the disciples.⁸¹ Although the

79 Sotomayor (1962a) 80 considers the *traditio clavium* a kind of successor to the scene of the water miracle, but this seems rather far-fetched.

80 See Korol (2011) 1622–43. He demonstrates that the lines drawn over the upper part of the left man's body are to be interpreted as folds, not as waves, as has often been done. His most important argument, in my view, is that the lower part of the man's body, his legs (undressed), does not show these lines, whereas that part of the body naturally was first to be immersed.

81 Since the apostles in the ship contribute to understanding the scene as a whole, their presence on the image seems to reflect the historical circumstances of the story rather

decoration of the baptistery cannot be shown to represent a specific baptismal programme,⁸² the scene of Peter trying to walk on the waves seems appropriate to the context because of the water involved, its expression of Christ's contribution to the salvation of people and the fact that Peter was a symbol of the stumbling Christian who was raised again by the Son of God.

The same scene might be depicted in the San Giovanni al Fonte baptistery in Naples (around 400): if it is, this damaged mosaic would support the idea of the baptismal character of the scene. Unfortunately, Peter nor Christ is visible anymore: only the boat with a man and several oars suggesting more persons on board can be seen. A second mosaic underneath shows Christ (standing on land) and a boat. Jean-Louis Maier—following Wilpert—suggested that the first scene could be that of Jesus walking on the waves and Peter trying to approach him, whereas the second could depict the miraculous draught of fishes, although no parallels remain for the latter scene.⁸³ although The upper scene can be compared to an image on a sarcophagus found in the Callixtus catacomb from the Constantinian period, where Christ rescues Peter. In contrast with the Biblical story, Christ seems to be ashore.⁸⁴ Maier's reading of the scenes seems convincing. The attempt of Peter to walk on the waves is also depicted on an onyx⁸⁵ and on a lost *gemma* (the so-called Aleander *gemma*).⁸⁶

Although the number of representations is restricted, the scene of Peter walking on the waves appears on several different materials: as a painting, in marble, and on other precious material (onyx). It was not only applied to

than an allegorical interpretation of the Church as a ship (for which see 2.2.2.2.5), *pace* Tristan (1996) 397–8.

82 Korol (2011) 1662.

83 Maier (1964) 38–42. He offers parallels for the miraculous draught of fishes on pp. 97–105, but these are just depictions of fishermen or fishes without any clue that this particular Biblical miracle was meant to be depicted.

84 Rep1 365. The three fragments that are taken together under this number seem to be interpreted as more than one scene in the description by Provoost (2011b) 133 (“? / redding Petrus uit het water / ?”), but there is no reason to do so. The scene has also been interpreted as the call of Peter and Andrew or the miraculous draught of fishes mentioned in John 21.1–14, see Konis (2008) 25. Another sarcophagus fragment is difficult to interpret, but could also show the rescue of Peter: Rep1 749.

85 Testini (1969) no. 34.

86 Korol (2011) 1631, but he expresses his doubts about the authenticity of the lost piece (cf. p. 1640); cf. already Sotomayor (1962a) 153 (note 3). An image is included in the third volume of the book in which Korol published his extensive article: Korol (2011) 1839, *fig.* 56,3.

funerary contexts, but also to a baptistery and used as jewellery. This testifies to the popularity of the scene. In poetry, the scene is used in three different contexts by Prudentius: in his apologetic against Symmachus (c. *Symm. praef.* 2,21–43; prominently in the preface), in a martyr hymn (*perist.* 7,61–5, cf. Paulinus' c. 26,374–8) and in a *titulus* (*ditt.* 35,137–40). Whereas the passage was used metaphorically in the first case in particular, its historical relevance was already revealed by Juvenius' *evang.* 3,93–126. The scene shows Christ's saving powers, but also the fallibility of Peter's belief. As such, the scene might be compared to the much more popular scene with the cock, which as a prelude to Christ's death was probably more suitable for a funerary context and therefore depicted more often. Maybe the popularity of this scene impeded the scene of Peter's attempt to walk on the waves to become a frequently used image in Christian art.

A difference between the two scenes is the particular importance of Christ in the scene of Peter on the waves, even if he is an essential figure to the scene with the cock too. This is confirmed by two poetic texts that probably accompanied a (lost) image and deal with the walking scene: the epigram of Prudentius (*ditt.* 35, see 1.10.4) mentions Christ first. In the *Miracula Christi* of ps.-Claudian, the passage is also mentioned. Although Peter is named first here, the author's treatment of the Biblical example reveals the primary importance he attaches to the figure of Christ (see 1.13.20).⁸⁷ In *perist.* 7,61–5 Christ's power is also central to the poet's understanding of the story.

Paulinus' treatment of the story (c. 26,374–8, cf. 1.11.5) is exceptional: it reflects the typological connection seen behind the figures of Moses and Peter (in art expressed most clearly in the scene of the water miracle, see 2.2.2.1.1), but in an original way. For Paulinus, the emphasis is entirely on Peter walking on the waves (mentioning neither the fact that it was a failed attempt, nor that Jesus saved him). *Carmen* 26 is one of the *natalicia* and was addressed to the assembled pilgrims and locals on the feast day of saint Felix. The story about Peter, the well-known apostle with whom the common man could probably easily identify, was particularly appropriate in this context.

2.1.3.1.4 Other Petrine Scenes

Other scenes are only rarely found. Peter is once depicted as the fisherman he was by profession: on a unique plate from Carthage from the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century, two fishermen are depicted with a building in

87 The same can be seen in two other examples given by Sotomayor (1962a) 154; cf. p. 155 for the importance of Christ.

the background.⁸⁸ They are distinguished through an inscription on the plate, which (probably) reads: *apostoli Petrus et Iohannes*. The function of the building is enigmatic. Maybe the object was used in a baptismal context, given the water and fishes depicted.⁸⁹ The scene points to the bond between John and Peter, who were called on the same day and worked together.⁹⁰ The miracle at the *Porta speciosa* described in Acts 3.1–10 was one of their joint manifestations. It is described by Prudentius in his *Dittochaeon* (45)—suggesting that it existed as a theme in art—and by Paulinus of Nola (c. 20,241–51). However, the poets suppressed John's role: Prudentius did not even mention him. By contrast the plate seems to express an interest in Peter's and John's joint mission. Gregory of Nazianzus mentions Peter's profession (1,2,12 223), but only to emphasise that he was a humble man.

Peter's escape from prison, described in Acts 12.6–10, is referred to only once in both media. Whereas Paulinus of Nola added on his own account that Peter left prison *sponte sua* (c. 15,263), guided by an angel, a sarcophagus from Fermo (Rep2 122, fig. 19–20) shows an angel (clothed in *tunica* and *pallium* without specific features) taking Peter by the hand in the fifth and last niche at the right end of the sarcophagus (fig. 20).⁹¹ The fourth niche has three soldiers, two standing and one seated, who has fallen asleep, leaning on his shield. They are not depicted as the soldiers in the scene of Peter's arrest—which referred to his martyrdom: most notably, they wear an Attic helmet instead of a *pileus pannonicus*. They thus remind of the soldiers in the scene of Christ presented to Pilate.⁹² The position of the sleeping soldier is identical to a comparable figure in the scene of two soldiers under the cross.⁹³ If the number of soldiers on the sarcophagus is to correspond exactly to the situation described in Acts,

88 Testini (1969) cat. no. 116. Two sarcophagi have also been suggested to represent Peter as a fisherman: RepI 358b and RepI 804. Following Provoost (2011c) 309, I would rather interpret the figures here as unidentified fishers in a maritime decoration programme (*pace* Koch (2000) 162, who suggests to date them in the Constantinian period, in contrast with Provoost (350–375) and the *Repertorium* (350–400)). RepI 804 is interpreted as a possible Jonah scene by Provoost (2011c) 346. In both cases, the fishers cannot be identified with the apostles.

89 Testini (1969) 271–3.

90 Cf. Testini (1969) 272–3.

91 This was the normal depiction for an angel in the fourth century: “(…) il cui aspetto non si differenzia in alcunché da quello degli altri personaggi maschili delle scene in cui compare (...)”, see TIP 107 s.v. angelo (Giuliani).

92 Sotomayor (1962a) 158. Cf. Saggiorato (1968) 87.

93 For examples, see the entry “Triomfkruis/Sterkranskruis” in Provoost (2011a) 60. The first example of two soldiers seated under a cross is Rep2 102, dated around 330.

where two soldiers are chained to Peter and others keep watch at the door of prison (Acts 12.6), Peter's escape from prison (after his escape from his own cell) is depicted: more probably, the number of soldiers was not considered of primary importance. The soldiers are not mentioned at all by Paulinus, but given the near absence of specific architectural backgrounds on early Christian sarcophagi, the soldiers were necessary figures to clarify to the viewer what was depicted.⁹⁴

The sarcophagus from Fermo is unique in more than one respect (cf. 2.2.2.2.4): the single depiction of Peter's escape from prison on this sarcophagus seems to confirm that it did never become a popular theme. This is reflected by its occurrence in poetry: Paulinus uses it because he is in need of a Biblical example for the story of Felix who is released from prison by an angel rather than out of interest in the story itself.

Several Petrine scenes remain that are not frequently used in early Christian art and never occur in poetry. One of them is the story of Peter and Ananias and Sapphira described in Acts 5.1–11. The scene is found on three fragments of sarcophagi, but the most splendid example is the Lipsanoteca of Brescia.⁹⁵ On the back of this casket (fig. 15), Peter is depicted, seated on a chair, and talking to a woman. The sack at her feet, and a man being carried away by four other men at the right, indicate that the story from Acts 5 is depicted: Peter tries to persuade Sapphira to tell the truth, while the deceased Ananias is already being removed from the scene. Catherine Tkacz saw in this image a symbolical meaning: she considered Peter and Sapphira “types respectively of the restored sinner and of the sinning Christian.”⁹⁶ Ananias' left arm is pointing to the right and draws the attention of the viewer to the scene of a man

94 It might seem rather ironic that the soldier on the left looks in the direction of Peter and the angel, without showing any sign of willingness to interfere in the situation. His direction of view probably only indicates the connection between the scenes in the two niches. His position is mirrored by that of the angel at the right end of the scene, who looks backward. In a similar way, the enigmatic scene on the left of the sarcophagus (also divided over two niches) is enclosed by a man at the left looking to the right and another one at the right looking to the left.

95 I could not find the fragment mentioned by Von Schoenebeck (1936) 328 (late Theodosian period), Tafel 47 in recent *repertoria*. It is referred to by Koch (2000) 182–3. It is not mentioned in the index of the *Repertorium*, nor by Provoost (2011a). The fragment is slightly larger than the tiny fragment of Rep1 463. The sarcophagus fragment of the Avignon sarcophagus (Rep3 158) resembles that of the Brescia casket, see Kessler (1979) 110–1.

96 Tkacz (2002) 103. The image of Judas can be connected to this idea, see id. 103–4.

hanging at a tree, depicted in a side-panel.⁹⁷ This man seems to be Judas: both Ananias and Judas sinned because of their cupidity, but in general Judas was a more popular example to refer to this sin.⁹⁸ The scene on the Lipsanoteca is comparable to the three examples from sarcophagi, which are all damaged and only show (part of) a figure carried by others.

The washing of the feet by Christ before the Last Supper is found on four sarcophagi. They are classified as a subgroup (the Christ-Peter group) among the so-called passion-sarcophagi.⁹⁹ One catacomb painting exists of the same theme, unfortunately heavily damaged.¹⁰⁰ The washing of the feet is depicted on the left side of the front of the sarcophagi, followed by Peter's arrest, a *Dominus legem dat* in the centre and the arrest of Christ and the washing of hands by Pilate on the right. Two sarcophagi (Rep1 679 and Rep3 53, fig. 21, one of them clearly is a copy of the other) omit the scenes of the arrest and divide the *Dominus legem dat* over three niches. Peter bears a cross as a symbol of the martyrdom of himself and of Christ (see 2.2.2.2.2).

All sarcophagi show the scene in more or less the same way. Peter is seated with his feet on a *suppedaneum*, Christ is standing in front of him. He is not actually washing Peter's feet, but a washbasin, a linen and (in two instances, both from Gaul) the fact that one of Peter's feet does not bear a sandal indicate that this is about to happen. The figure of Pilate in the hand washing scene is modelled on that of Peter in the scene of the foot washing.¹⁰¹ Although the loosening of sandals has a symbolical connotation in early Christian thought (especially in connection with the story of Moses and the burning bush: Exod 3.5), it is difficult to see whether or not it plays a role in the interpretation of the scene discussed here, since it is also natural to undo a sandal before

97 The idea of small, vertically shaped side-panels was taken over from existing ivory carvings, see Cutler (1998) 2.

98 Kalinowski (2011) 171. Cf. Newhauser (2000) 66 and the *appendix* on pp. 132–41.

99 See Saggiorato (1968). She discusses the Christ-Peter group, her catalogue numbers 26–31, on pp. 126–131: she offers five good examples and also a reconstruction by Wilpert on the basis of three small fragments only (no. 27: none of the fragments bears a trace of the scene of the washing of the feet), see pp. 72–3. Cf. for the subgroup Christ-Peter also Sotomayor (1962a) 101–13.

100 Provoost (2011c) 333 (F437); image in Nestori (1971) 190. The image is found in crypt A1 of the Calepodio catacomb. The feet of a seated man and a prostrating figure are visible. The left foot (about to be washed) of the seated figure is suspended and has a sandal (according to id. p. 191, the sandal is painted “forse inavvertitamente”).

101 Giess (1962) 43.

washing the feet.¹⁰² Of course, the whole scene has a symbolical meaning, since the symbolism is already clearly implied in the Biblical story (the story is not mentioned in order to pay attention to daily routine, but as an example of Jesus' modesty).

The appearance of the scene in Christian art seems to be part of the increasing attention paid to the story of the passion. The image formed a contrast to the washing of hands of Pilate, both in composition and in meaning: Peter was purified internally, Pilate only externally. This might have been more important a reason for the existence of the subgroup with the washing of the feet than a deliberate attempt to remove Paul from these sarcophagi.¹⁰³ Furthermore, Christ is easily recognised as the most important figure of the scene.¹⁰⁴ The washing of the feet was also associated with baptism, especially in Gaul and in the North of Italy.¹⁰⁵ These aspects made the washing of the feet a suitable subject for the decoration of sarcophagi. The relatively minor presence in art might be explained by the fact that the story is described in the Gospel of John only. Moreover, some dispute arose between Milan and Rome about the meaning of the story: the Romans emphasised Christ's example of modesty, others (especially Ambrose) the reference to the ritual of baptism. This dispute seems to have diminished the popularity of the scene rather than to have incited it.¹⁰⁶

One would expect to find the well-known story of the washing of the feet in poetry too, at least in the Biblical epics. But both Juvenius and Proba did not versify the story. They did pay attention to the Last Supper to which the washing of the feet precludes, which is of course almost unavoidable as a story explaining the origins of the Eucharist. The washing of the feet apparently was considered of minor importance. An explanation can be found in the characteristics of the genre: Christ had to be portrayed as a Christian hero, in

102 For a symbolic interpretation, see Giess (1962), pp. 45–6 in particular. He postulates a prototypical image made for the illustration of a commentary by Origen, which rests a mere hypothesis. Supposing pagan cultic practice behind Christ's way of holding the linen—id. 25—is certainly too far-fetched.

103 Pace Huskinson (1989) 137: "This (the replacement of the scene of Paul's martyrdom by that of the washing of the feet, *rd*) suggests that the scene was introduced specifically to express some newly important aspect of Christ's relationship with Peter, which had no parallel in the life of Paul, and had more to do with apocalypse and sovereignty than with Passion and martyrdom."

104 Sotomayor (1962a) 110.

105 Giess (1962) 9–12.

106 Huskinson (1989) argues that the sarcophagi reflect the dispute, see especially p. 140.

accordance with the epic tradition. A story that merely showed his modesty did not fit the epic description of the Saviour.

The raising of Tabitha (Acts 9.36–41) is depicted on two sarcophagi only.¹⁰⁷ The scenes are comparable: Peter is shown in front of a bed, on which a seated woman is depicted. The apostle has raised her from death. The depiction seems to be slightly deviant from the Biblical story where Peter raises Tabitha after he has sent away the women in her room (Acts 9.40). He makes her stand and then calls the women back (Acts 9.41). The image, however, shows both the women's presence and the performing of the miracle: the women depicted in the foreground probably refer to a moment before the miracle, when the women showed the clothes made by Tabitha (Acts 9.38). The sarcophagus of Sidonius (Rep3 497a, fig. 22) shows a musical instrument on the left of the image, which is a sign of sorrow.¹⁰⁸ It might also have served to underline the beautiful carving of the sarcophagus. The scene is depicted on the (less important) short side of the coffin, but might be considered a pendant to the raising of the servant of the centurion from Capernaum depicted at the left side of the front.¹⁰⁹ The other depiction is a fragment from the front of a sarcophagus.

Some scenes are found in poetry, but not in art. The most remarkable is that of the Transfiguration (Matt 17.1–9): although we do not have any examples of it in art before the fifth century (one of the most famous examples is the apse mosaic in the Sant'Apollinare in Classe from the mid-sixth century; in the East, the Saint Catherine's Monastery from around the same time also has a mosaic with the Transfiguration), the description of the story in a *titulus* by Ambrose suggests that it was depicted. In poetry, it is only extensively described by Juvenecus (*evang.* 3,316–52), who also elaborated on Peter's role in the story.

Some scholars have interpreted a painting in the Commodilla catacomb, in the *cubiculum Leonis*, as the vision of Peter in Joppa, described in Acts 10.9–16

107 Rep3 68 and Rep3 497a. Possibly, the scene has also possibly been depicted on Rep3 201b, but this sarcophagus has been lost: the identification of Tabitha was insecure according to ancient description, see Provoost (2011c) 398. For the possible interpretation of the Tabitha scene on the sarcophagus from Fermo, see 2.2.2.2.4. The scene also appears on the remnants of an ivory casket in the British Museum dated to the years 420–430 (no. 1856,0623.7): Volbach (1952²) no. 117 or Testini (1969) cat. no. 16.

108 Sotomayor (1962a) 156. But cf. Turcan (1999) 70–1 about music as medical cure (cf. 1 Samuel 16.14–23) and the lyre as a symbol of the soul. Some of these notions might have played a role too.

109 Cf. an example from the British Museum that has been compared to the depiction of the raising of the daughter of Jairus on the ivory casket from Brescia, see Volbach (1952²) 61. The casket from the British Museum is his cat. no. 117.

and in a *titulus* by Prudentius (*ditt.* 46). However, this interpretation is far from certain, especially since the figure allegedly being Peter rather looks like Paul (he has a pointed beard, cf. 2.1.3.2).¹¹⁰ The *titulus* suggests that the scene was part of the early Christian repertoire of art.

2.1.3.2 Paul

Whereas Paul is often mentioned in poetry, in art only few stories from his life remain. In the fifth century, a cycle of images depicting Paul's life decorated the basilica of Saint Paul, but it was lost in the fire of 1823.¹¹¹ It seems rather improbable that this cycle was created entirely *ex nihilo*: a greater variety of fourth-century images with the apostle Paul probably existed, but examples of it did not survive till our times. It has been suggested that Paul's vision of heaven (2 Cor 12.2–4) is one of them. More specifically, in one of the very few attempts to relate an early Christian image to a poetical text, Veganzones suggested that a painting in the Commodilla catacomb (fig. 23), dated to the years 375–380,¹¹² shows a conversation between God and Paul mentioned by Damasus in his first epigram (cf. 1.5.4):

conscendit raptus martyr penetralia Christi,
 tertia lux caeli tenuit paradisos euntem;
 15 conloquiis domini fruitur, secreta reseruat,
 gentibus ac populis iussus praedicere uera

'After being torn away, the martyr ascended to the sanctuary of Christ: the third light of heaven, which is paradise, held him when he was going. He enjoys the conversations of the Lord, he keeps the secrets, he is ordered to preach the truth to heathens and Christians (...)'

The painting shows a man with a beard, wearing a *tunica* and *pallium*, looking upward, making a gesture of acclamation. In the upper part of the vertically

¹¹⁰ It concerns the image 5–2 ("Farbtafel 31") in Deckers, Mietke et al. (1994a), p. 98. Provoost (2011c) 333 (F435) mentions the scene as "verschijning van Christus aan Petrus (?)", but it is not clear which apparition is meant.

¹¹¹ See for later copies of these lost images—at the time of copying they had already been altered by a restoration in the thirteenth century—Waetzoldt (1964) 55–64; pp. 58–61 for the images from Acts (including many scenes with Paul). It includes an image of Saul persecuting Christians (Waetzoldt no. 631); a reference to Paul's life before his conversion in poetry is only found in Damasus *ep.* 1.1–5, see 1.5.4.

¹¹² Dated by Deckers, Mietke et al. (1994a) 25.

shaped image, the bust of a man with a nimbus is depicted, who holds his hand downward to the man on the ground level. The man above seems to be Christ, the man standing has the typical features of Paul. To the right of the image, vegetal and Christian symbolical elements decorate the wall. Underneath the image, another figurative scene is depicted (fig. 24): a man with a nimbus on a *quadriga* making a gesture of speech and his charioteer are shown in front of three other figures, heavily damaged. Behind the chariot, a person bearing a staff is visible with another figure.

Veganzones offered a comprehensive interpretation of the images and interpreted them all in the light of Damasus' text:¹¹³ the scene with the *quadriga* is a depiction of the *raptus* (Dam., *ep.* 1,13) in the third heaven, Paul is the man with the staff behind the chariot. The other figurative image denotes a conversation between Paul and Christ (v. 15: *conloquiis domini fruitur*). The vegetal decoration is a reference to the *tertia lux* or *paradisus* (v. 14). Although it is the merit of Veganzones to have found coherence between all images of the *arcosolium* in the *cubiculum Leonis*, objections remain numerous. First of all, a cycle of images referring to one specific passage from a literary text is extremely rare in early Christian art, especially when the text concerned is not a well-known narrative, but a rather metaphorical, mystical passage. Moreover, Paul is never depicted with a staff in early Christian art, there seems to be no reason why he would be walking behind the chariot in a scene depicting his journey to heaven, nor is the chariot (or the people around it) mentioned at all in either Damasus' description or the Biblical text.¹¹⁴

There is also a chronological objection: epigram 1 was probably written after 382, when Damasus ordered Jerome to make a new version of the Latin Bible. Probably, the epigram was not visualised immediately; therefore, there also seems to be a chronological problem with Veganzones' suggestion.

113 Veganzones (1986), pp. 341–58 in particular. Veganzones shows no sign of use of Pillinger (1980), who interprets the same images in a different way and links them to Prudentius' *tituli* (p. 113). Paleani (1986) has also tried to prove influence of Damasus' poems on the paintings in the catacombs, but does not arrive at clear-cut conclusions.

114 Depictions of a chariot are known of course from the ascension of Elijah and the mosaic of Helios in mausoleum M in the *Grotte vaticane*, which has traditionally been interpreted as Helios-Christ. For the mosaic see e.g. Suzawa (2008) 37–53, who considers the image as a failed attempt to introduce an image of syncretism in early Christian art, or Hijmans (1997), who is not convinced that the image is Christian. For Elijah, see Provoost (2011a) 78, mentioning six sarcophagi and two frescoes with nine scenes of Elijah, mostly from the fourth or fifth century.

Whereas the vertical image indeed seems to visualise an epiphany of Christ to Paul¹¹⁵—whether meant to be occurring on Paul's way to Damascus or to represent another vision (see e.g. Acts 23.11)—, the alternative interpretation of the scene with the chariot, i.e. that it depicts the story of Philip with the eunuch (see 2.1.3.6), seems to be stronger than Véganzones' suggestion.

Paul's conversion was a crucial event in his life and was mentioned by several poets: Damasus, Gregory of Nazianzus, Prudentius and ps.-Ausonius. However, it (possibly) found on one sarcophagus only: Rep3 291 from Marseille (fig. 25). The story is mentioned by Prudentius in his *Dittochaeon*: this testifies to the fact that images of Paul's conversion probably existed, which is confirmed by drawings of the decoration in the San Paolo.¹¹⁶ On Rep3 291 the conversion of Paul may be depicted on the front in the niche on the far left: a man with the features of Paul is depicted standing in front of Christ. The only clue to an interpretation of the scene is actually given by an open scroll handed over to Paul by Christ. It is unclear to which story this scene refers, or whether it does refer to a particular story at all. Since the head of Paul has been reworked, the expression of his face does not help to interpret the scene.¹¹⁷ The evidence for the depiction of the conversion of Paul is scarce. Although the depiction of a conversion could have been seen as a suitable device to incite pagans to be converted too, the figure of Paul was first and foremost seen as a holy saint and Christian art was probably more directed towards Christian than pagan viewers. Moreover, scenes of the lives of other martyrs before their conversion were not depicted either in early Christian art.

On the same sarcophagus, the scene next to the representation known as Paul's conversion might be the lapidation in Lystra (Acts 14.19).¹¹⁸ Maybe this scene was also depicted on the child sarcophagus Rep2 70, but even if the man in the middle of that fragment is indeed the apostle, it is not sure if the lapidation is depicted: if so, the men throwing stones (whose faces are barely visible)

115 This is also the opinion of Utro (2011) 35–6, relating the image to the conversion of Paul. A conversation of God and Paul is also assumed to have been part of the cycle of paintings in the San Paolo: Waetzoldt (1964) 60, no. 664.

116 See Waetzoldt (1964) 60, no. 632, also Guj (2002) and the preceding note. Wilpert (1929–1936c) 352 interprets Rep3 291 as Paul's conversion.

117 That the figure depicted should be identified as Paul, is assumed because of the presence of Paul in the scene next to it, where the face has also been reworked, but the interpretation of the image is less disputed. However, it is still possible that neither of the scenes is depicting Paul at all (or only one of them). More particularities in Christern-Briesenick (2003) 143–4 and Uggeri (2010) 212–4.

118 “Arguably an anti-type to his martyrdom” according to Elsner (2011) 369. However, the scene seems mainly to be meant as the visualisation of an event from Paul's life.

use a kind of bricks, whereas the figures on Rep3 291 use a kind of pebbles. The lapidation is also depicted on an ivory panel now in the British Museum and dated in 420–30.¹¹⁹ In poetry, the event is referred to by Damasus—in his enumeration of sufferings endured by Paul (*ep.* 1)—but with the simple word *lapides* (*ep.* 1,19, also used in the Bible) only. Given the lack of explanations other than that of a lapidation for Rep2 70 and the features of the man who is stoned, it seems reasonable to consider the scene as an image of the lapidation of Paul. Moreover, other—indirect and later—sources confirm the presence of this story in the repertoire of Christian art in the late fourth and fifth centuries.¹²⁰ The difference in shape of the stones seems of minor importance.

It appears that only one story of the life of Paul that occurs in poetry and art alike is undisputed: the story of the miracle of the viper on Malta (Acts 27.9–28.6). After Damasus had mentioned it in catchwords (*ep.* 1,21), Prudentius versified the story in one of the most remarkable poetic pieces on an apostle in early Christian poetry: the *praefatio* of the first book of the *Contra Symmachum*. It is also depicted on an ivory diptych from the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century (fig. 26), known as the Carrand diptych, allegedly found in the surroundings of Mainz.¹²¹

Kathleen Shelton has rightly pointed out that the central figure of the scene on the ivory in fact is Publius, the governor of Malta mentioned in Acts 28.7. Since diptychs were often used as gifts between members of the aristocracy, this was entirely appropriate. The miracle performed by Paul (he is bitten but not killed by a viper) is acclaimed by the governor, while other bystanders react with amazement.¹²² Paul does not seem to hold anything in his *palium*, *pace* Shelton.¹²³ In the lower register, people bringing the sick to Paul

119 Bricks are depicted nowhere else in lapidation scenes in early Christian art, according to Dresken-Weiland (1998) 23, but the objects used for the lapidation on the British Museum ivories (Volbach (1952²) no. 116) have a rectangular form rather than a pebble-like shape, *pace* Dresken-Weiland.

120 It was also depicted in the San Paolo, see Waetzoldt (1964) 60, no. 650.

121 Extensively about the diptych (Volbach (1952²) no. 108); Shelton (1986). The story was visualised on two paintings in the San Paolo: Waetzoldt (1964) 61, nos. 667–8.

122 Cf. Shelton (1986) 177: “In the diptych, the official Publius is introduced as a witness to the miracle, and not merely a witness, but the primary one whose reaction is literally central and forceful.”

123 Shelton (1986) 178 suggests that he holds an orb as a sign of his power. I do not think this object to be necessary to Shelton’s main argument: the scene with Paul would confirm his power over nature, paralleled by Adam naming the animals on the other side of the diptych (see *id.* 179). These two stories were often discussed together in patristic literature in late antiquity, see *id.* 173–4.

(Acts 28.9) point to the miracle, which was the reason for their belief in Paul's healing power: "Thus a single great scene of witness is constructed, with natives pictured as official bodyguards and attendants and natives shown suffering various ills taking the place, but, in a sense, swelling the ranks, of the natives on the beach who are the sole witnesses specified by the text."¹²⁴ Prudentius only refers to the miracle itself, without mentioning the Maltese or Publius (see 1.10.5): the poet highlights Paul's miracle as the most important element of the Biblical story. Prudentius ignores the sick people healed by Paul afterwards, but he does elaborate on the effect of the snakebite on Paul and the apostle's immediate recovery (1 c. *Symm. praef.* 38–42). Comparable to the diptych, where the real focus is on Publius and therewith on the aristocratic owner of the diptych (or on the man who gave it away as a present), is the use of the story of the viper in order to make a reference to a present situation: Prudentius compared the viper to Symmachus who attacked the Church, in the person of Paul.

In the scene in the upper register it is not possible to identify a particular story known from a textual source, although it is tempting to interpret the person with a codex standing in front of a seated Paul as Luke (whose importance as an evangelist might then be emphasised by the fact that he is standing on a *suppedaneum* that is smaller than, but quite similar to, that of Paul). The bond between Paul and Luke was often mentioned in patristic literature and also in Gregory of Nazianzus' *Carmen* 1,1,22 1–2. Maybe Timothy or Barnabas was meant to be the man standing behind Paul's chair.¹²⁵ However, no clue for the interpretation of these figures is given. It is sure that Paul's intellectual power is emphasised (cf. 1 c. *Symm. praef.* 59–61), completed by his 'physical' power over nature depicted below. The intellectual character of Paul is of course expressed in all depictions of the apostle by his philosopher dress (*tunica, pallium*, sandals) and the scroll he holds in his hands. These are characteristics of all the apostles: but Paul sometimes seems to have been depicted with the features of the ancient philosophers Socrates and Plotinus.¹²⁶ The same respect for the

124 Shelton (1986) 177. Although tempting, it is not sure that the lower figure second from the left is Publius' father (Acts 28.8), since he does not look like an old man, *pace* Kessler (1979) 114.

125 See Shelton (1986) 175–6, who rightly rejects an interpretation of the scene as Paul before Felix, Festus or Agrippa (Paul's superior position would not be appropriate) or his speech at the Areopagus (Paul was standing there, and had a larger audience than is suggested on the ivory). Cf. Kessler (1979) 113: "The episode is impossible to identify with certainty."

126 See Zanker (1995) 284 (Socrates), referring to an ivory pyxis from Berlin (Vollbach (1952²) no. 161) and Huskinson (1982) 4 and Bertelli (1958–1966) 685 (Plotinus).

erudition of Paul is seen in poetry, where Paul's writings are frequently cited and Paul is hailed as a writer of divine doctrine, e.g. in Paulinus c. 24,263–98.

2.1.3.3 Judas

In poetry Judas was the best known apostle after Peter and Paul, measured by the frequency in which he was mentioned. He occurs exclusively in the context of the story of the Passion.¹²⁷ Regarding art the same conclusion can be drawn. Judas' status as a disciple is unclear in visual representation, due to the lack of individual features of the apostles. If Peter and Paul are highlighted, however, the number of twelve disciples is often maintained. Paul thus replaces Judas, although this is not in accordance with the Biblical narrative.

Most visual scenes depict Judas' betrayal. The Judas kiss is shown on six sarcophagi, mostly from the second half of the fourth century.¹²⁸ Christ and an apostle are shown approaching each other: often other people, probably apostle-witnesses, are surrounding the two. Judas is always depicted without beard: this might imply that he was young, i.e. imprudent.¹²⁹ On most sarcophagi, the scene of the Judas kiss is a singular scene from the story of the Passion. Only Rep3 42 and Rep3 498 have a programme clearly connected to the Passion: the former has the scene intertwined by a depiction of Christ with his disciples in Gethsemane and Christ before Pilate, the other has a depiction of the *martyrium* of Peter and Paul and Christ before Pilate on the front (the Judas kiss is depicted on the left short side). Since the betrayal of Christ seems to be a strange scene to depict outside a cycle of scenes of the Passion, on the other sarcophagi it might have been considered an appropriate evocation of the Passion of Christ itself, which was not depicted before the fifth century.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ This reflects Judas' presence in the Bible: the only passage in which Judas is mentioned as a character not directly connected to the Passion is John 12.4–6 (John 8.70 actually refers to the story of the Passion).

¹²⁸ Rep2 121 mentioned by Provoost (2011a) 81 is a mistake, Rep3 42 is meant. Rep3 86, apparently related to Rep3 83A (but with only one similar scene assured), has only partly been preserved. The front is broken at the right side, where the figure of Christ walking towards the right is still visible. It has been suggested that the Judas kiss was depicted, see Christern-Briesenick (2003) 63.

¹²⁹ As suggested by Ficker (1887) 148, but see 2.1.3.4 for a young apostle possibly referring to John. On Rep3 62 and Rep3 199A the heads of the figures have been heavily damaged, the other sarcophagi show a beardless Judas (including Rep3 42 and Rep3 83A, which are damaged but have Judas' head fairly intact).

¹³⁰ The same suggestion has been made regarding the singular hanging of Judas on the Lipsanoteca from Brescia, see Kalinowski (2011) 173, since the death of Judas is combined with the scene of Christ bearing his cross on the ivory panels in the British Museum

The scene of Christ before Pilate was more frequently used with this objective in mind, but in Gaul the scene of the Judas kiss apparently replaced it sometimes.¹³¹ Due to its contrast to the kiss of peace in the Church, the Judas kiss was an all the more powerful symbol of betrayal: maybe, therefore, the image was also meant to warn the viewer not to make the same mistake.¹³² In poetry the Judas kiss was barely mentioned: given that Juvenecus could hardly avoid it in his versification, Hilary was the only author to deliberately mention it, albeit briefly (*Hymn.* 32). Hilary had a Gaulish background. His hymn might therefore have contributed slightly to the subsequent popularity of the theme in Gaul.

On one occasion a Judas scene has been depicted outside the field of funerary sculpture: it is depicted on an ivory casket that was maybe used as a reliquary, known as the Lipsanoteca from Brescia, and dated around the year 400. The reliquary is known for its exceptionally rich decoration programme, which includes no less than 59 images.¹³³ On the back of the casket (fig. 15), an enigmatic scene possibly showing the vocation of Peter and Andrew or the Transfiguration (see 2.1.3.4)¹³⁴ and the scene of Peter with Sapphira (Ananias being carried away, see 2.1.3.1.2) are placed in the central panel. Two vertical strips on the left and the right of that panel depict a tower (left) and a man hanging from a tree (right). The latter must represent Judas.¹³⁵ He might be deliberately contrasted to Peter: both Judas and Peter were sinners, but the former “repented and became the head of the Church, while Judas despaired and hung himself”.¹³⁶ On an ivory panel in the British Museum from 420/430,

(Volbach (1952²) no. 117) that probably belonged to a reliquary and thus were part of an object with the same (probable) function as the Lipsanoteca.

131 Only Rep2 152 was found outside Gaul, in Italy.

132 For the use of Judas’ name to warn readers of inscriptions not to behave improperly see Lafferty (2014) 273.

133 Volbach (1952²) no. 107. See Kalinowski (2011) 168–74, p. 171 in particular: “Was die Darstellungen der Lipsanothek von jenen unterscheidet, ist die Erzählfreude (...).” Several monographs on the casket appeared, most recently Tkacz (2002).

134 But see Tkacz (2002) 221–2 for a total number of eleven different interpretations of this scene suggested over the years. Tkacz herself sees a depiction of the Transfiguration (see pp. 92–4).

135 See Kalinowski (2011) 172, detecting as a central theme behind the decoration programme the will of God and his punishment. Cf. 2.1.3.1.4.

136 Tkacz (2002) 104 also connects the two vertically shaped side panels on the right side of the casket to the scenes of Peter and Judas. If the parallel of Peter and Judas is accepted, one might even think of interpreting the vertical side panel with a tower at the utter left of the back of the casket (the counterpart of the panel with the hanging of Judas) as a reference to Peter (as a variation on his status as ‘pillar of the Church’, cf. Gal 2.9). For the different interpretations of the tower on the casket, see id. 241.

Judas is depicted with a purse at his feet. That the betrayal was committed for money was also emphasised by Proba, Gregory of Nazianzus and Prudentius: the latter did so in a *titulus* revoking Judas' death. On the casket, the suicide of Judas could also be connected with the cycle of the Passion on the lid of the reliquary (and maybe with the cock in the same position on the front side, referring to the denial).

The hanging of Judas has also been proposed as a reading of the heavily damaged scene on the Servanne sarcophagus (Rep3 42 mentioned above, fig. 27), in the lower register second from the right. However, only the lower part of the body is visible and it is doubtful if the figure's feet are really hanging above the ground.¹³⁷ Unfortunately, the head of Judas on this sarcophagus is damaged in the scene of the Judas kiss and absent in that of Judas' hanging. A drawing by Pierre de Beaumesnil shows Judas with a Janus head in both scenes. A Janus head would of course fit Judas' double adherence to the group of Christ's disciples and his opponents (cf. Gregory I,2,1 680–3, 1.9.2) and the remaining parts of Judas' head on the sarcophagus do not exclude that the drawing is accurate. However, a Janus face for Judas would be extraordinary and foreign to the more realistic way all other Biblical figures are depicted on sarcophagi in early Christian art. It is therefore difficult to accept the reliability of the drawing.¹³⁸

Juvenius mentioned Judas' death in his epic and Prudentius did the same in a *titulus*: since it is the most significant element in the *titulus*, it was probably Judas' suicide which was (suggested to be) depicted. In his *Psychomachia*, Prudentius also deliberately referred to it: Judas is presented as one of the examples of victims of the personified *Avaritia*. Therefore, the fact that Judas betrayed Christ for money is most important here and the story is not used in a context of the story of the Passion. Especially for Prudentius, but also for some of the owners of sarcophagi, the scene had a meaning on its own and

137 See Christern-Briesenick (2003) 30: "Erhalten unterer Teil des Gewandes, Tunica und Pallium sowie Füße, von Denen der r. nur mit Spitze auf den unteren Randstreifen aufgesetzt."

138 According to Wilpert (1929–1936a) 33 the reconstruction is reliable: "Non c'è, questa volta, nessuna ragione di mettere in dubbio l'esattezza del copista." Cf. Christern-Briesenick (2003) 31: "bleibt zweifelhaft". Prof. Moormann draw my attention to an image of a double-headed black creature in the Mithraeum of Hawarte, for which see Gawlikowski (2007) 353 (and his *fig.* 9). Gawlikowski notices no further parallels, except for those in modern Iranian folklore, see id. 360. Since almost no paintings from Mithraea remain (id. 352), it is impossible to say whether double-headedness was more widespread in Mithraic cult as a sign of evilness and could have functioned as a source of inspiration for images of a double-headed Judas.

expressed the danger of cupidity and apostasy. On sarcophagi the scene might even have been chosen as a warning for possible desecrators of the grave.

2.1.3.4 John

Although John is mentioned several times in poetry, mostly by Ambrose, his presence as an individual apostle in early Christian art is minimal. He does appear in a scene evoking his work as a fisherman together with Peter (see 2.1.3.1.1).¹³⁹ In Matthew 4.18–22 both apostles are called by Jesus shortly after each other and their profession is emphasised by the famous words of Christ when he called Peter and Andrew (Matt 4.19): “‘Come, follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will send you out to fish for people.’”

Maybe the vocation of Peter and Andrew or that of John and James (or John or James with Peter) is depicted on the Lipsanoteca in an enigmatic scene on the back of the casket (fig. 15), showing Christ between two young men, possibly apostles, at the shore. The hand of God is depicted in the top of the scene, next to the head of Christ. It is difficult to see its function in a scene depicting the vocation. A composition of Christ with water and the hand of God rather call Christ’s baptism to mind, but there is no other element in the scene that supports this interpretation. Most often the scene has been interpreted as the Transfiguration, showing Elijah, Christ and Moses. In that case, it is unclear why the water would be depicted, since this is the one crucial element that specifies the circumstances of the scene and does not support the idea of the Transfiguration, which took place on “a high mountain” (Matt 17.1). Maybe it shows Christ’s appearance at the Sea of Galilee, after the Resurrection (John 21.1).¹⁴⁰

It is rather unlikely that John is depicted on the Celsus sarcophagus (Rep2 250) as a witness of a depiction of Thomas’ disbelief.¹⁴¹ Behind Thomas, a

139 Testini (1969) 272–3, cat. no. 116. Testini compares the depiction of John and Peter together with a sarcophagus from Barletta (Rep2 410) from the end of the fourth century where the apostles are depicted in a row with their names identifying them, but the names were incised afterwards, see Dresken-Weiland (1998) 126 and Provoost (2011c) 417, who dates them to the tenth or eleventh century.

140 Cf. Delbrueck (1952) 32–4.

141 Wilpert (1929–1936c) 331 states that the beardless apostle is the apostle John, since the story of Thomas’ disbelief is only told in the gospel written in his name. According to Ficker (1887) 148 John should have been depicted generally without beard to indicate that he was young. However, this seems to be based on depictions after the fourth century. It must be said that the apostle identified as John in the recently discovered catacomb of Saint Thecla is also beardless, see Mazzei (2010) tav. 44. However, since most apostle witnesses do not have a beard (see Ficker (1887) 72) and since no examples survive of a specific iconography of John before the year 400, it is doubtful that John was meant to

young, beardless man, an apostle without doubt, is watching Thomas putting his finger in Christ's body. John is the only evangelist to tell the story of Thomas' disbelief, but there is no other clue to the identification of the apostle on the scene and the presence of one or more apostles as witnesses of an event is very usual in Christian art (cf. 2.1.2).

John as an evangelist or otherwise as a writer of Scripture is depicted only a few times: on a sarcophagus fragment from Rome (Rep1 134, fig. 28) and on the sarcophagus of Concordius (Rep3 65, fig. 4). On the fragment, three evangelists are rowing in a boat, with Christ as the helmsman. If their names were not written on the fragment, it would have been impossible to identify the three as the writers of the gospels. With the inscription, the boat might indicate the ship of life, guided by Christ, of whom the evangelists provided written testimonies. The scene is damaged on the left side: undoubtedly, Matthew was mentioned too. On the sarcophagus of Concordius, all evangelists are depicted with their names written in an opened codex or scroll. This difference in objects shows a desire for variation from the side of the craftsman carving the sarcophagus. In poetry, John's writing activities are often mentioned and seem to be one of the main reasons for the veneration of the apostle (especially for Ambrose).

2.1.3.5 Thomas

The apostle Thomas has been depicted twice on sarcophagi before the year 400. In both cases his incredulity is depicted. Several depictions of the same scene from the beginning of the fifth century testify to the increasing interest in Thomas.¹⁴² However, the central figure of the scene is Christ. The scene is comparable to that of Peter, Christ and the cock, which was depicted frequently (see 2.1.3.1). Both the story of the denial and that of Thomas' incredulity at first sight seem offending for the apostle involved, but they rather provide the opportunity for the viewer and the deceased to identify with the apostle: the mistakes made by the apostles can function as a sort of excuse for the faults that they make as ordinary believers who did not always live up to Christ's commandments.¹⁴³ The two poets mentioning Thomas' incredulity,

be depicted. If John was meant, one would expect him to bear an open scroll or a similar attribute, but even the *volumen* that the apostles bear most often is not visible, since the apostle is hidden behind the figure of Thomas.

142 E.g. Rep2 377 (=Kollwitz & Herdejürgen (1979) B2, Taf. 26,40), dated 410–420. See also one of the four ivory panels in the British Museum (Volbach (1952²) no. 117), Konis (2008) 59–60, the *ampullae* from Monza (5th–7th century, id. 31–2) and the wooden door panels of the Santa Sabina (432–440, id. 62–7).

143 Cf. Konis (2008) 33 referring to a sermon by John Chrysostom in which Thomas' incredulity is explained as one of the many examples of disbelief in Jesus' Resurrection. Cf. also Most (2005) 165: "The viewers to whom Jesus is addressing himself in these images are

Commodianus and Paulinus, interpret the story in the same way, following a line of exegesis that was widespread (see 1.1.1 and 1.11.8). Commodianus, a poet clearly inclined to use poetry for the instruction of ordinary people, even combined the stories of Peter and Thomas in one passage (C. 549–62).

Both sarcophagi from the fourth century are closely connected: Thomas (without beard) puts his finger in Christ's wound, while another apostle is watching him, standing behind (see 2.1.3.4). Thomas seems to touch Jesus, although this is not mentioned in the gospel (Thomas is only challenged to do so): Most has argued that "the constraints of the visual medium" forced the craftsmen to depict him in this way, in order to enable viewers to recognise Thomas.¹⁴⁴ This seems rather unlikely: there is only one specific story in the Bible of an apostle openly incapable of believing that Christ has risen, a man to whom the Lord offered to touch his wounds, which can be visualised without showing Thomas actually touching. The craftsmen took the opportunity to dramatise the Biblical story in a way comparable to the methods of the poets of Biblical epics. The lack of explicit visualisation of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul is a clear example of the artists' general reluctance to use the dramatic visuality of their medium. Maybe the depiction of the scene of doubting Thomas reflects the greater freedom in repertoire that arose in the second half of the fourth century.

2.1.3.6 Philip

The apostle Philip has often been confused with the deacon of the same name (mentioned in Acts).¹⁴⁵ For this reason, the one image that remains from Philip the deacon is discussed here.¹⁴⁶ It is a painting in the Commodilla catacomb

not so much the disciples in a particular moment of the past, as rather ourselves in our fallen present time and in Jesus' redemptive timelessness." However, especially on the two sarcophagi from the fourth century, the iconography suggests that Christ is involved in the historical setting of the story of the Passion; a more a-historical setting is shown on a Ravennatic sarcophagus (Rep2 377) which has the scene taking place outside, instead of inside a house (in accordance with the Biblical account) by the depiction of two cypresses, see Konis (2008). The cypress was a symbol of death and mourning in antiquity (not mentioned by Konis), see e.g. Neue Pauly s.v. Zypresse (Hünemörder).

144 Most (2005) 178, mentioning a "systematic contrast" with the scene of Mary (*noli me tangere*) as the other reason to depict Thomas actually touching Christ's wound (see pp. 172–7 in particular).

145 See LThK s.v. Philippus, biblische Personen. 1) Philippus, Apostel and 2) Philippus, "Evangelist" and Burnet (2014) 409–20.

146 Wilpert (1929–1936a) 25–31 interprets all images of two men on a chariot as Philip converting the eunuch, but is not followed by modern scholarship. His examples lack any sign

(fig. 24, discussed in 2.1.3.2) and has been interpreted as the visualisation of Acts 8.26–40: the story of a eunuch from the East travelling back home from Jerusalem and reading Scripture. Philip explains to him what he reads (a passage from Isaiah, interpreted as a prophecy of Christ's death) and baptises him. This story accounts for the other people on the image, since the eunuch was a high ranking official, travelling with servants. Still, it is difficult to see why the person on the chariot (who must be the eunuch) has a nimbus, since this is an unusual way of depicting ordinary people in early Christian art.¹⁴⁷ Maybe the eunuch represented for the owner of the *arcosolium* the founder of the Ethiopian (or another Eastern) Church, to which he may have had some connection. This was particularly appropriate in the fourth century, when Ethiopia was Christianised.¹⁴⁸ Otherwise, the eunuch was an outstanding example of the universality of the Christian message and was therefore given the nimbus proleptically in the scene of his conversion. Philip is depicted with a staff.¹⁴⁹ The story was never used in poetry (in conformity with the general lack of interest in Philip in that medium).

2.1.3.7 Matthew

The Concordius sarcophagus (Rep3 65, fig. 4), depicting all the apostles seated with Christ in the middle, shows one apostle who has an opened codex with the name of Matthew written inside. Although the authorship of the Gospel of Matthew is strictly spoken not canonical (it is not mentioned in the text itself),

of a Christian character of the scene. Wilpert (1938) 87–89 mentions “un’ insigne rappresentazione in scultura del principio incirca del secolo III, da noi scoperta” (p. 88: according to note 2 on the same page Wilpert found it in the depot of the Museo Nazionale) with a depiction of Philip on a two horse chariot with the eunuch and a driver. A *cursor* precedes the chariot and offers alms to a wife with her child, seated in front of a house. The latter scene seems to belong to the story of the eunuch, but is entirely alien to the Biblical story. I was unable to trace where the relief can be found now. It is clear, however, that this scene cannot be from the third century, when no stories from the lesser well-known Biblical figures were depicted.

147 See LCI 3,323–4 s.v. Nimbus (Weidlé). The apostles are sometimes depicted with nimbi from the second half of the fourth century onwards, but Biblical characters in general are not depicted with nimbi before the sixth century, see TIP s.v. Nimbo (Guj). Occasionally pagan tradition might have been of influence: Cameron (2011) 711 points to the depiction of *nimbi* with “all the main characters” in the Vergilius Vaticanus manuscript of the *Aeneid*. In general, *nimbi* for the apostles were not as unusual as is suggested by Béjaoui (1984) 47 and 50 (mentioning only two possible examples of apostle with a *nimbus*).

148 See LThK 1,1147 s.v. Äthiopien, 111. Kirchengeschichte (Hammerschmidt).

149 Véganzones (1986) 339 has this as an objection against the interpretation with Philip, but the alternative offered by himself has no parallel either.

for Christians in late antiquity Matthew's authorship of the gospel was closely related to the canon. However, visual representations of the authors of the gospels were rare: a most likely exception is the fragment from Rome, where Matthew originally must have been depicted (Rep1 134, fig. 28, see 2.1.3.4).

Although Matthew was of course well-known as the writer of a gospel and also referred to as such in poetry (direct references in Prudentius and Gregory of Nazianzus only), his authorship of one of the gospels was not often emphasised in art. The same can be said of the apostle John, although the appreciation for the latter as a saint in late antiquity was much more abundant than that for Matthew.

2.1.4 *Other Scenes with the Apostles*

Few scenes remain in which the apostles are neither depicted as individuals, nor as Biblical characters, witnesses of miracles, people making acclamations to Christ or as pupils of their master. Except for the Sermon on the Mount (see 2.1.2), the other scenes all but one have to do with the last period of Christ's stay on earth. The most disputed scene of those is that known as 'the farewell of Christ and his disciples' (see e.g. fig. 29; cf. Luke 24.50–1). A man is depicted, sitting on a chair with his feet on a *suppedaneum*, surrounded by standing and prostrating men. Some of them have raised their hands before their face. Although the latter gesture has led many to think of the expression of mourning, this is probably not the way it was understood by an ancient viewer: it rather seems to express veneration and awe before a divine appearance.¹⁵⁰ As such, the scene might express a situation just before the Ascension.

On an ivory plaque from Munich (the so-called *Reidersche Tafel*, fig. 30) from around 400, two men are present at what clearly is a depiction of the Ascension.¹⁵¹ One of them makes the same gesture as some of the men on the sarcophagi discussed above.¹⁵² According to the Biblical account, Peter, James and John were present at the Ascension: maybe here Peter and James are depicted, since an apocryphal text mentions them as the only witnesses of the Ascension.¹⁵³ However, since the scene is entirely about Christ, the number

150 Deckers (1996) 149; he discusses the three sarcophagi on pp. 147–52. Engemann (1996) 293 suggests that the scene represents a farewell and a homage to Christ. Koch (2000) 175 categorises them as "Abschied Christi von den Jüngern".

151 Volbach (1952²) no. 110.

152 See Hahn (2012) 49–51 about the gestures shown on the plaque.

153 The apocryphal *Epistula Iacobi apocrypha*, dated to the first half of the second century and probably originally written in Greek, has Peter and James present at the Ascension. See Kirchner (1999⁶) for a discussion and translation of the text. The influence of this

of apostles might also have been of little interest to the craftsman producing the ivory. Ambrose's *Carmen de ternarii numeri excellentia* in a comparable way abbreviated the trio of Peter, John and James to Peter and John only in a reference to the Transfiguration (verse 8), mentioning the two apostles who were most important for Ambrose (see 1.6.3).

On the Servanne sarcophagus from Arles, with a similar depiction of the Ascension (Rep3 42, fig. 27), three apostles are visible.¹⁵⁴ This sarcophagus has several remarkable scenes connected to the story of the Passion. The lower register of this sarcophagus front shows Christ with his disciples in Gethsemane, the Judas kiss, Christ before Pilate, the women at the empty grave, Christ appearing to his disciples after his Resurrection,¹⁵⁵ Judas' suicide and the Ascension. The scene at the far left (probably) shows Christ with three disciples. The scene is damaged at the right. One disciple stands on the left and another man is sitting, apparently asleep (his head, inclined to the ground, rests on his left hand). Next to them, Jesus is depicted upright. On the other side of Christ, another man is sitting, with his head also supported by his hand. The scene depicts the moment Jesus finds his disciples asleep after his prayer. The three men depicted would then be the three disciples whom he took with him: Peter, John and James (Matt 26.37). However, if the reconstruction is correct, a fourth man was added to the scene, looking towards the scene on his right and standing before a tree (Gethsemane was a garden with olive trees, see Luke 22.39 and John 18.1), and a fifth one is looking to the scene, although he is actually part of the space reserved for the scene of the Judas kiss. These two disciples might represent some of the other apostles left behind (Matt 26.36).

Rather, one should not look for exact parallels, given the narrative coherence of the whole row of images, which almost fluently shift from one to the other and depict the Passion chronologically. This obvious chronological order not only enforces the interpretation of the scene in Gethsemane, but also the equally rare scene of Christ appearing to his apostles after his Resurrection, depicted on the right side of the relief. Although no other clue

rather obscure apocryphal text on a workshop of ivory production in the West around the year 400 seems doubtful, *pace* Kessler (1979) 110, who sees a connection.

- 154 Two other prostrating figures do not seem to be apostles, but the scene is damaged and therefore difficult to interpret precisely. For an image larger than that in the *Repertorium*, see Wilpert (1929–1936b) t. 15. For Rep3 219 (damaged, only Christ is visible) see Christern-Briesenick (2003) 115: “Die Himmelfahrtsszene ist mit mehreren Aposteln zu ergänzen (...).”
- 155 Hempel (1963) 592 seems to interpret this scene as “*chiamata dei primi apostoli*”, but this would not fit the context provided by the rest of the images, nor are there concrete arguments in favour of his hypothesis.

for the interpretation of the scene is given (it shows Christ speaking to two pairs of apostles), its position between the women at the grave and Judas' hanging and the Ascension points to the given interpretation.¹⁵⁶

Sometimes, the apostles were depicted in a symbolical way (cf. 2.2.2.6), e.g. as sheep (cf. Matt 10.16).¹⁵⁷ The sarcophagus of Stilicho offers a good example: on the front (fig. 10), beneath a scene of Christ teaching amidst his apostles, twelve sheep are depicted, walking from two sides towards the holy lamb, depicted on a rock. The two "sheep folds" (depicted without distinction) from which the two rows come forth might refer to the two main backgrounds of Christians: those coming from the *ecclesia e gentibus* (the heathens) and those from the *ecclesia e circumcissione* (the Jews).¹⁵⁸ This is also implied on the mosaic of the Santa Pudenziana (fig. 8). On two sarcophagus fragments (Rep2 366) dated to the fifth century in the Archaeological Museum in Split, two groups of sheep are depicted with twelve names of the apostles added in painting (fig. 31–3).¹⁵⁹ Paul replaces Matthias. One name on the first fragment is difficult to read: logically it should be Judas Thaddeus also called Lebbaeus.¹⁶⁰ the inscription reads [*iibeus*] or [*iiveus*]. The fragments are likely to have been part of the lid of a sarcophagus (cf. the shape of e.g. Rep2 367).

The apostles were also sometimes depicted as doves (cf. Paulinus' apse *titulus*), but remaining examples are scarce (cf. 1.11.2).

2.2 The Apostles and Non-Canonical Traditions

The apostles were strongly associated with several non-canonical texts that circulated widely in late antiquity. Whereas the canon was a first and obvious

156 This is not the case on the left short side of the sarcophagus of Stilicho (Rep2 150, fig. 12) where four men are depicted: the second man has a deviant dress; the other men seem to be apostles. It has been suggested that this scene represents some scene of Christ appearing to the apostles after the Resurrection: the story of the road to Emmaus appearance or a teaching scene, see Dresken-Weiland (1998) 57. The alternative interpretation by Deckers (1996) 157 has been discussed in 2.1.2.

157 The spandrels of the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus (fig. 42) show a unique use of lambs representing other Biblical figures too, see Malbon (1990), pp. 72–90 in particular.

158 See e.g. Rep1 30 or Rep1 675 for sarcophagi with the same scene, but without a building.

159 See Cambi (2004) 78; Marin, Kirigin et al. (2003) 16–7 and Žuvić (1932). The latter publication is in Croatian: as a result I could only consult its French summary. No publication discusses the sheep and apostle names as interesting elements in themselves. Žuvić focuses on the inscription (but not on the apostle names).

160 Wilpert (1929–1936c) 352 also reads this name.

choice for both poets and artists, many stories about the apostles remained that could also be a source of inspiration. In this chapter the apocrypha are briefly introduced first. Subsequently, apocryphal and other non-canonical stories in art and poetry are discussed (cf. Appendix 2).

2.2.1 *The Apocrypha and the Canon*

The canonical books do not provide much information about the apostles.¹⁶¹ Little is explained about their background and their lives before their vocation by Christ. After a more or less chronological story of Christ's life in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—the story of the rise of Christianity after Christ's presence on earth is continued in the Acts of the Apostles, written by the same author as the Gospel of Luke (cf. Acts 1.1–3). These Acts contain information about Peter and Paul rather than about the other apostles. For example, the death of only two apostles is mentioned: that of James (Acts 12.2) and that of Judas Iscariot (Acts 1.15–20; cf. Matt 27.3–10). The deaths of Peter and Paul are not described: a remarkable omission, which is more elaborately discussed below. The silence of the Bible on the apostles' lives and deaths notwithstanding—or rather due to this silence—legends about the life and fate of the apostles began to circulate among Christians already in the first centuries AD; the faithful were eager to know more details about the primary witnesses of Christ. The cult of the saints—which became particularly popular in the second half of the fourth century—only added to this interest. A considerable part of the (oral) legends that thus arose has probably not been preserved, but we still have access to a huge variety of apocryphal texts from the beginning of our era.¹⁶²

The books that we now know as apocryphal books—which is, of course, an anachronistic term for a period in which the canon was not yet entirely fixed—form a diverse collection of texts, written for different purposes. Some of them were written independently from the canonical writings, others to add information to the canon (without intentionally contradicting the canonical books).¹⁶³ In some cases, apocryphal texts were produced to compete with canonical

161 For the canon cf. 2.1. Even in the Acts of the apostles “ihre Persönlichkeit tritt wenig in Erscheinung”, cf. RAC Supplement 1,1161 s.v. Biographie II (spirituelle) C. Christlich (Van Uijtfanghe).

162 See e.g. Luke 1.1 for references to possible oral traditions; cf. Bovon (2008c) 318.

163 However, the apocryphal texts do not explicitly refer to the idea of adding to the canon, cf. Bovon (2008b) 205 and *passim* for a comparison between the canonical and apocryphal acts of the apostles.

books.¹⁶⁴ The canon was often associated with the mainstream Church with which certain Christian groups did not agree. When the Church became more formalised in the fourth century—especially after its legalisation in the second decade—the distinction between orthodox and heterodox became even more important than before and several Christian factions defined themselves by their definition of a canon of authoritative books.¹⁶⁵ In the second half of the century, the Roman claim of primacy among the episcopal sees, which was based on its inheritance of the see of Peter, made everything what was said about the apostles (and Peter in particular) even more sensitive.

Many apocryphal texts are characterised by a narration full of miracles and other stories that easily appealed to large groups of people. Several apocrypha had the life of one of the apostles as their subject or were even presented as written by an apostle. Among them were five early and influential acts: the lives of Andrew, John, Paul, Peter and Thomas. The first four of these are datable to the period 150–200, the acts of Thomas to the first half of the third century. The *Acts of Peter and the twelve apostles* probably date from the second half of the third century. This text belongs to the first apocryphal texts about the apostles, but was created independently from the five acts mentioned above.¹⁶⁶ All these texts were written in a period when the (currently) canonical Acts of the Apostles still waited to be generally accepted as part of the canon.¹⁶⁷

The popularity of the acts of these apostles seems to be reflected by Eusebius' *h.e.* 3,1, which offers the most ancient reference to the apostles' missionary activities around the globe after the Ascension but only mentions the five apostles from the oldest apocryphal acts.¹⁶⁸ In general, the book of Acts of the Apostles was not very popular, which is revealed by the lack of commentaries on the book and some remarks of John Chrysostom about his parishioners in Constantinople whom he assumes not to know the book (around the year 400!).¹⁶⁹

From the beginning of the fourth century onwards, a second phase in the development of apocryphal literature about the apostles is to be discerned,

164 See e.g. Schneemelcher (1999^{6a}) 41; different opinion in Gounelle (2004a) and (2004b).

165 Cf. Halbwachs' vision on the third and fourth centuries, referred to in Assmann (2005) 56–7. For the role of the canon see id. 103–27; also Roukema (2004) and Schneemelcher (1999^{6b}).

166 See Gounelle (2004a) 4 (date) and 5 (dependency).

167 Gounelle (2004b) 419.

168 For the passage in Eusebius (*h.e.* 3,1,1–3) see Junod (1981), arguing that the whole passage is taken from Origen.

169 Johnson (2008) 2–3. See e.g. the homilies *In Acta apostolorum* 1,1 and *In principium actorum* 1,1, referred to by id. 3, nt 10.

in which apostles other than Andrew, John, Paul, Peter and Thomas became main characters of apocryphal texts. At the same time, new apocryphal stories about the apostles whose lives were already described were added to the corpus. Apocryphal texts from this phase clearly refer to the canonical books of the Bible.¹⁷⁰

The relationship of these acts with the canonical Acts has been heavily debated. The similarity in titles (suggesting a certain generic subdivision) is misleading: most titles of apocryphal works were added by modern scholarship, but do not necessarily reveal anything about the content or genre of the text. In case of the apocryphal and canonical Acts of the Apostles, Gounelle has even suggested that the Acts of the Apostles were named after the five apocryphal lives mentioned above instead of vice versa: as has already been said, the name suggests that Acts is about all apostles, although only part of the lives of Peter and Paul is described. This led to criticism and probably to the writing of the apocryphal acts to compensate for these lacunae. The (re)naming of *Acts* as *Acts of the apostles* would then be a counter reaction in order to suggest that the *Acts of the apostles* did actually offer a complete narrative about the apostles. Even if Gounelle's hypothesis is debatable, it shows our lack of knowledge on the use of the apocryphal and canonical acts in the early Church.¹⁷¹

During the third and fourth centuries (and equally thereafter) more and more texts circulated that told the lives of apostles or other Biblical figures or were written as theological treatises (orthodox as well as heterodox). In contrast with the Biblical account—which clearly presents Christ as the main character of the narrative and (regarding the apostles) focuses on the twelve as a group—apocryphal stories are often devoted to one specific apostle or to a pair of the apostles. In the Bible, the apostles function primarily as witnesses of the miracles performed by Jesus Christ.¹⁷² Apocryphal texts, however, offer much material which could easily be visualised in the same way as the miracles of Christ, which form a significant part of the stories from the New Testament

170 Gounelle (2004a) 6. For the development of the relationship between canonical and apocryphal books see also Bovon (2008b).

171 See Gounelle (2004a) 17–22 about the titles of apostle acts and Gounelle (2004b) 419–31 about the parallels between the apocryphal and canonical acts of the apostles: on p. 436, he concludes: "(...) l'indépendance de deux des quatre actes antérieurs au III^e siècle—*Actes d'André*, *Actes de Jean*—et des *Actes de Pierre et des douze apôtres* à l'égard des *Ac* (i.e. *actes canoniques*, rd) est très probable, la question restant ouverte pour les *Actes de Thomas*. Seul l'auteur de la rédaction de Vercell des *Actes de Pierre* a clairement connu le récit lucanien."

172 Bovon (2008b) 206 and 214. These Biblical characteristics were also signalled in early Christian poetry, see especially 1.2.2.1.

that are used in early Christian art.¹⁷³ In general, the apocryphal acts of the apostles show more similarities with the gospels than with Acts.¹⁷⁴

2.2.2 *Visual and Poetic Representations of Non-Canonical Apostle Stories*

The representation of the apostles in poetry has been systematically investigated in chapter one. The combined results of part one with those of several other studies conducted on early Christian art makes it possible to present a table in which the presence of apocryphal stories in the preserved Christian art and poetry up to the year 400 is compared. This table can be found in Appendix 2.

It appears that relatively few stories are mentioned. Although almost thirty different apocryphal apostle stories are detected in early Christian art and poetry, the different stories are not used frequently in poetry (for the dominance of which see below). Many of them are only very briefly referred to, sometimes with a single word (e.g. the missionary regions of the apostles). At the same time apocryphal stories were abundant in late antiquity: apart from the five earliest apocryphal acts of the apostles, no less than forty texts are mentioned as “Jüngere Apostelakten” in Schneemelcher’s overview of apocryphal literature.¹⁷⁵ Moreover, we possess only part of the variety of apocryphal legends that were known among the Christians of the first centuries. Except for the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, no apocryphal story has been versified by more than one poet. The visualisation of the apocryphal stories referred to in poetry is very restricted. The martyrdom of the *principes apostolorum* is the main exception. Only two other non-canonical stories are used in poetry and visual culture alike: the story of Peter and the dog of Simon Magus and the martyrdom of Andrew.

Peter is by far the most popular apostle in early Christian art (discussion below).¹⁷⁶ In poetry the number of non-canonical stories about Paul is slightly larger than that about Peter (four instead of three), but in art only few

173 This “story-telling quality” is also mentioned by Cartlidge & Elliott (2001) 172. It distinguishes a great deal of the Biblical and apocryphal stories from other Christian texts.

174 Bovon (2008b) 207.

175 De Santos Otero (1999⁶) 381. To be sure, not all of these texts are written in Greek or Latin nor do they all date before the year 400. On the other hand, many of them are believed to have been originally written in Greek and to contain stories older than the date of recording (which is often obscure).

176 However, the present investigation does not arrive at 25 different scenes of Peter, as mentioned by Testini (1968) 108, but at approximately 20.

non-canonical images of Paul are found.¹⁷⁷ Images of Paul and Thecla only rarely occur before the year 400. An image that has Paul as a teacher as its main element is only attested on the Carrand diptych (fig. 26).¹⁷⁸

Therefore, from the life of Paul only his martyrdom was depicted frequently, albeit less often than that of Peter.¹⁷⁹ The *Dominus legem dat* is an image of Paul together with Peter; the depiction of Paul's water miracle seems to be nothing more than a mistake on the part of the craftsman who made the painting, since it is unique in art (and not attested in poetry either) and a water miracle performed by Peter was extremely popular. The most popular images of Peter are found on sarcophagi and only rarely in the catacombs. This might show the growing importance of the figure of Peter in Christian Rome: most sarcophagi were produced in the fourth century, whereas many catacomb paintings are dated to the third century. The traditional repertoire of images was continued in the burial places underground, but when a new field of art was 'christianised', it was possible to create new imagery.

Only two poetical references to Peter have never been visualised. One of them is the obscure remark from Gregory of Nazianzus about Peter eating lupines. It was probably nothing more than Gregory's personal way to say that Peter lived austere; therefore, no depiction of it is expected to have ever existed. The same probably counts for some of Gregory's remarks about Paul (1,2,3,88). Otherwise, the survival of only few works of art from the Eastern part of the Roman Empire might also be an explanation.¹⁸⁰ Peter's speech to the disciples

177 For Paul in apocryphal texts, see Dassmann (1998) 89–93; in iconography id. pp. 95–7. Cf. the concluding remarks regarding Paul in early Christian art by Fabricius (1956) 114: "Das Verhältnis Petrus-Paulus ist schwankend und lokal sehr verschieden. Petrus scheint nur in Rom selbst in den Vordergrund getreten zu sein, während die eben besprochenen Monumente (Theklamotive!) zeigen, daß im Osten und Orient Paulusszenen beliebt waren. Daß es wieder die Apokryphen sind, die den literarischen Hintergrund bilden, ist um so erstaunlicher, wenn man an die Menge der plastischen Berichte aus der biblischen Apostelgeschichte denkt. Und doch betonen die apokryphen Erzählungen das Wesentliche: Den großen Lehrer, der die Menschen durch seine Predigt im innersten packt (Thekla) und den großen Märtyrer, der um seines Glaubens willen freudig in den Tod geht."

178 For an interpretation of which see Shelton (1986), pp. 175–6 for the scene of Paul teaching. A less innovative description is given by Uggeri (2010) 198–200. Both authors seem to be right in interpreting the scene on its own, assuming only a loose connection with the other images on the diptych. Cf. 2.1.3.2.

179 Paul's popularity was at its peak in the period 360–410, see Huskinson (1982).

180 Cf. Kollwitz (1941) 145, about sarcophagi from the Eastern Roman empire: "Selbst den Verlust einer ganzen Reihe weiterer Stücke mitberücksichtigt, bleibt die Gesamtzahl doch verhältnismäßig niedrig." Cf. Koch (2000) 399–402.

after Christ's crucifixion—one of the very few instances of Proba telling a story that is not in the Bible—is not visualised either, although in a way it is the poetical account of the idea of Peter's primacy among the apostles, expressed in many images in which Peter occupies a more important position than the other apostles.

Regarding the apostles other than Peter and Paul, only one single scene from their apocryphal lives (or other legends) has been depicted: the martyrdom of Andrew. Around the year 400, on a few occasions, an apostle bearing a cross appears who does not seem to be Peter. He must be Andrew, the only other apostle who allegedly died on the cross. In poetry, his martyrdom is only described in the pseudo-Damasian hymn 70 (the translation of his relics is mentioned by Paulinus). Both poem and works of art foreshadow the greater popularity of Andrew in the fifth century.¹⁸¹

Only a few other apostle stories are used in poetry. The story of John in a cauldron of boiling oil was discussed by Ambrose, but has never been depicted: nevertheless, Tertullian already mentioned it, which suggests that it was accepted in the Church of North Africa at least.¹⁸² The story about Martinianus told by Paulinus was clearly a local legend and only written down around the year 400. The missionary regions of the apostles are sometimes mentioned in poetry, but only briefly.

A remarkable feature of the corpus presented in appendix 2 is the absence of several Christian poets: Juvencus, Proba and Hilary never refer to apocryphal stories, nor does Amphilochius of Iconium or one of the anonymous poets at the end of the fourth century (see 1.13.18). Damasus (also Paulinus) indirectly evokes the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, but mainly focuses on their saintly bodies being in Rome in his epigram 20 (in the San Sebastiano fuori le mura). Although a promoter of the martyr cult, he makes remarkably little use of all the apocryphal stories about Peter and Paul. Even in his biographical epigram 1 about the life of Paul, Damasus does not mention Paul's martyrdom (but this might have to do with the specific context of publication, see 1.5.4). Paulinus clearly is most open-minded towards apocryphal texts, but even he uses only a few of them and they do not have a major place in his oeuvre. The use of

181 See Kollwitz (1941) 159–60 about the few images of (presumably) Andrew bearing a cross in early Christian art. To these examples he adds a relief fragment from around 390 (his "Tafel 48"), but Andrew's presence there can only be hypothesised from analogous images, since the heads of the apostles on the fragment are lost.

182 Tertullian's *De praescriptione haereticorum*, in which this story is mentioned, is dated around 203, see Von Albrecht (2003) 1212. Despite his later heresy, Tertullian was widely read, see id. 1228.

apocrypha remains exceptional among all poets, but is most obvious in the works of writers of poetry on the martyrs.

Although several non-canonical images are already present in the first half of the century, the second half of the fourth century shows more variety in the use of non-canonical material. More art was produced in later times, because of the acceptance of Christianity and the increasing number of Christians which resulted in a greater variety in imagery. Most non-canonical apostle scenes are found on sarcophagi. Exceptions include those of the meeting of Peter and Paul, Peter and Paul in a ship and Paul as a teacher. It is clear that sarcophagi offered by far the greatest variety in early Christian non-canonical images of the apostles. Sarcophagi probably reflected more than other works of art the personal preference of their owners, also in the choice of decoration. Although positive evidence for this assumption is lacking, the problem of the meaning of the images' juxtaposition, which seems rather arbitrary, gives reason to suppose a personal touch in sarcophagus reliefs. Although sarcophagi were often placed in or near churches, there is no proof for control over the decoration by the Church. Similarity of composition of images between sarcophagi is probably explained by the prospectus of images on sarcophagi that the workshops offered.

Images of Christ performing a miracle often show bystanders with features similar to those of the apostles and they are therefore commonly interpreted as disciples witnessing the marvels of Christ (see 2.1.2). Some images of Peter show the opposite situation: Christ is present at a miracle performed by his most fervent apostle.¹⁸³ There is an important difference here, of course: the apostles actually were present in person at Christ's miracles, but Christ's presence at Peter's miracle must be interpreted spiritually: however, the apostle-bystanders and Christ attending the miracles of Peter have in common that they both were considered the most authoritative possible witnesses of the event. By depicting them, it is made clear to the viewer that the miracles were, in every sense, real, historical events. At the same time, the veracity of these events meant something to people living in late antiquity: the miracles from the past guaranteed that Christ could also work in present times.¹⁸⁴

The origin of several depictions in this chapter can be found in non-canonical texts that are still available. But among the most popular scenes in early Christian art we find some scenes that are not clearly derived from any remaining textual source, or the sources are not contemporary. In these

183 See e.g. Sotomayor (1962b) 53–4 and Dresken-Weiland (2010) 143.

184 Cf. Dassmann (1973) 298–301, who emphasises “die Vergegenwärtigung von Heilserfahrungen und -erwartungen” (p. 301).

cases, craftsmen seem to have built on oral tradition (Peter's water miracle, the meeting of Peter and Paul), or to have elaborated on Biblical ideas. The latter instances often resulted in allegorical scenes (*Dominus legem dat*).¹⁸⁵ Actually, invention of scenes by the workshops seems to have been extremely rare, since scenes were naturally considered more appealing when their interpretation could be based on existing traditions.

2.2.2.1 The Petrine Trilogy in Early Christian Art

The number of Petrine images in early Christian art is remarkable. Most of them can be traced back to mainly three scenes: the water miracle, Peter and Christ and a cock and Peter's arrest. A fourth scene is sometimes connected to this triplet: the Peter reading scene. The scene of Peter with Christ and the cock is canonical and has already been discussed (2.1.3.1.1) The other scenes do not have a canonical source.

2.2.2.1.1 *Peter's Water Miracle*

The scene of the water miracle (see e.g. fig. 34) was frequently depicted.¹⁸⁶ It shows a man hitting a rock with his staff; water is streaming from the rock (obviously as a result of the blow) and (mostly two) men—often with the *pileus pannonicus*—are kneeling and drinking. This scene is frequently seen in the Roman catacombs (from the beginning of the fourth century onwards) and is among the earliest Christian figurative images that remain.¹⁸⁷ At the end of the fourth century, the scene lost its popularity.¹⁸⁸ The depiction of the scene can differ: on the frescoes in the catacombs, the miracle worker has no beard, in contrast with his appearance on the sarcophagi (with a few exceptions).¹⁸⁹ Moreover, whereas the first miracle worker is accompanied by none or by a rather random number of water drinking figures, the bearded thaumaturge

185 The distinction between historical and allegorical images was already foreshadowed in the pagan art of late antiquity, see Dinkler (1939) 71–2.

186 Van Moorsel (1965) 36 counted 75 frescoes, 138 (fragments of) sarcophagi, 25 gold glasses and other small objects and 2 graffiti bearing the image. In contrast, Provoost (2011a) 42 (restricting himself to frescoes and sarcophagi) lists 14 frescoes (only counting fresco-ensembles, which might at least partly explain the deviant number) and 148 (fragments of) sarcophagi. Koch (2000) 186–7 provides examples of sarcophagi.

187 Some of the oldest examples include that in the Capella Greca in the Priscilla *coemeterium* and in the necropolis of Callixtus, see TIP 217 s.v. *Miracolo della fonte* (Nieddu).

188 See Provoost (2011a) 42.

189 Cf. Mazzei (2010) 203 and Dresken-Weiland (2010) 126–8 for exceptions to this rule, also discussing gold glasses. Similarly: id. (2011a) 130–3.

stands (in most of the cases) next to two drinking people bearing a *pileus pan-nonicus* or other military clothes.¹⁹⁰

Scholars generally agree on the meaning of this difference: Moses is depicted in the catacombs, Peter on sarcophagi. On gold glasses it is often impossible to determine who is depicted, as is the case in other *arti minori*. The producers of some of these objects were aware of possible confusion and added inscriptions. The bowl from Podgoritza is a well-known example. It does not only give the name of the figure but also describes the scene: *Petrus virga percit [...] fontes ciperunt quarere*.¹⁹¹

The depictions of Moses procuring water from a rock have a canonical source in Exodus 17.6. The depiction of Peter's water miracle seems to have been derived from a legend that is still known to us through apocryphal literature: the *Martyrium Petri* 5 describes how Peter converses two soldiers who keep guard of him in the Mamertine prison.¹⁹² The apostle baptises them with water which he made flow from a rock. The acts of Processus and Martinianus—from a later date—mention the same story, adding that the soldiers prostrated themselves—which is also often depicted—and that Peter let the water stream from a particular place: the Tarpeian rock in Rome.¹⁹³ The soldiers depicted in the scene of the water miracle are now generally considered to be Processus and Martinianus. According to Georg Stuhlfauth, this story would also explain the presence of trees on some depictions of the scene. However, since the same scholar also notices their presence in images of Moses' water miracle, it seems improbable that this reference was intended, whereas—as Stuhlfauth suggests himself—in the water miracle of Moses the trees are just decorative.¹⁹⁴

190 See Sotomayor (1962b) 53 for variations of the image.

191 Or: *Petrus uirga percussit, fontes coeperunt currere*: 'Peter has hit with his staff, wells have started to flow.' The Latin is cited after DACL s.v. coupe ix. Coupe de Podgoritza, one of the rare places where the existence of the unreadable word(s) from the second line is mentioned. Cf. Murray (2006) 214; TIP 219 s.v. Miracolo della Fonte (Nieddu) and Sotomayor (1962b) 65–7 ("Excursus. La escena de la fuente en las otras artes"). It has been suggested that the inscription was not originally part of the object, see Levi (1963) 58.

192 Edition: Lipsius (1959 (1891)). *Nam postquam nos (sc. Processus et Martinianus) credentes in hac uicina Mamertini custodia, fonte precibus et ammirabili signo crucis de rupe producto, in sanctae trinitatis nomine baptizasti (...)*. Surprisingly, the cross is never depicted in the scene of the water miracle. Drinking water can be a symbol for baptism, see Van Moorsel (1965) 44. He discusses the role of the water miracle in the early Christian fathers at pp. 5–34.

193 For Processus and Martinianus, see the *Acta Processi et Martiniani, die secunda julii* in Carnandet (1867) 270 B2.

194 Stuhlfauth (1925) 66–7.

Maybe the story was known in several (local) versions since on the Podgoritza cup Peter does not hit a rock but a tree.¹⁹⁵ The existence of a story in which it was the tree that gave the water for baptism probably gave rise to decorative trees on other objects with a more conventional representation of the scene.

Jutta Dresken-Weiland considers the Moses/Peter figure of less importance, which would explain why Peter could replace Moses in this scene.¹⁹⁶ She also points to the one case in which Paul performs a water miracle (he must have been confused with Peter in oral tradition or by a erring craftsman), in the catacombs of the saints Peter and Marcellinus.¹⁹⁷ On another sarcophagus fragment (Rep1 442), Christ himself performs the water miracle.¹⁹⁸ These two cases notwithstanding, the distinction between depictions in catacomb paintings and on sarcophagi in early Christian art is clear: this seems to imply that the depicted figure did matter. The correspondence of the image with the story known from the acts seems to be too strong to ignore.

From an iconographical point of view, the scene might have been chosen to equal Peter to Moses, which was not unusual and was in accordance with late antique theology.¹⁹⁹ Another Petrine scene in early Christian art, known as *Traditio legis* or *Dominus legem dat* (2.2.2.3.1), also seems to purposefully bear a reference to the Biblical story of Moses receiving the law.²⁰⁰

However, Dresken-Weiland—the author of the most recent extensive publications on the water miracle scene—formulated several arguments against

195 See Levi (1963), especially pp. 58–60, who does not arrive at a convincing explanation for the tree on the Podgoritza cup. Levi thinks of a date palm; Murray (2006) 214 sees an olive tree and interprets as follows: “(…) I suggest that Peter (...) became an antitype of Moses striking the Rock which symbolizes Christ, the theme was then extended to show Peter dispensing sacramental oil from Christ the Tree of Life.”

196 Dresken-Weiland (2010) 121–9.

197 Id. 128.

198 See Dresken-Weiland (2010), pp. 128–31 in particular. She also refers to the sarcophagus fragment that shows Christ standing behind Peter performing the miracle (mentioned above), but this seems to be a mere expansion of the original scene (which might even explain the one example of Christ himself performing the miracle). On a fresco in the Callixtus catacombs no thaumaturge is depicted: it shows a man drinking from what seems to be a cascade, on both sides of a good shepherd. This scene does not seem to be connected to the scene discussed here, although the symbolism is similar (drinking the “living water”).

199 Most examples in patristics are from the late fourth century, see Dresken-Weiland (2010) 123–4, more elaborately Pietri (1976) 1437–42 (also pp. 317–9 about Moses as a prototype of apostles and bishops): maybe the popularity of the scene in art in this case contributed to its occurrence in theological treatises?

200 See Van Moorsel (1965) 41–6 for a discussion regarding the interpretation of the scene.

the suggestion (proposed among others by Paulus van Moorsel) that the primary message of the image is the soldiers' baptism, depicted by their drinking, even if she also allows a "baptismal interpretation" for some depictions, especially those from the end of the fourth century.²⁰¹ The act of drinking water as a symbol of baptism was already mentioned by Cyprian in the third century.²⁰² Dresken-Weiland sees a more complex imagery, in which water and rock are the most important elements. It is important to distinguish between intention and interpretation: the designer of this scene might have had more complex theological considerations in mind, but the legend about Processus and Martinianus in any case was a source of inspiration. Moreover, the average viewer of the scene would probably connect it primarily to the apocryphal legend.

The alternative interpretation of the scene of the water miracle by Dresken-Weiland explains the presence of the soldiers from the growing importance of the army in late antique society: the water miracle was part of the Petrine trilogy that was ordered by (former) soldiers who wanted to depict their conversion and baptism.²⁰³ One of her main objections against the interpretation of the scene as a depiction of the story of Processus and Martinianus is that the water miracle is not mentioned in patristic literature during the period it is depicted. Furthermore, the *martyrium* of Processus and Martinianus that has been suggested as the source for the image (the oldest written source naming the jailors that is known to us) is from the fifth century. However, the late date of the Acts of Processus and Martinianus does not exclude an earlier (maybe only oral) existence of the stories that they contain.²⁰⁴ Moreover, a church for the two saints existed in Rome already in 392–394.²⁰⁵ The elements of the story that are reflected in the visual material might indicate that the apocryphal

201 Dresken-Weiland (2010) 121 and 135–6.

202 See Sotomayor (1962b) 52; cf. Van Moorsel (1965) 36–41.

203 For the role of soldiers in the choice of this imagery, see Dresken-Weiland (2010) 144–6.

204 Evidently, sometimes people knew only half of the story or were not interested in the figures of Processus and Martinianus but only in Peter. This might explain the depiction of the water miracle with only one soldier to which the word *miles* is added on a glass bowl from Obernburg, for which see Deckers (1998) 10 (with a photograph on p. 9).

205 Smith (1988) 267 with note 22 (but cf. Spera (1998) 35–6 who suggests that it was only later that the two were linked to the story of Peter). Whether two versions of the story of the saints' conversion should be supposed on the basis of divergences between the literary sources (of a much later date) and visual representations—as is suggested by Smith (1988) 269–71—seems doubtful. Smith's attempt to use details of the legendary texts to reconstruct what exactly happened seems to bear too much trust in the historical accuracy of the sources.

story contains several aspects that made it an appropriate story to depict on fourth century sarcophagi.

Before Dresken-Weiland, Ulrich Fabricius had already rejected an extra-Biblical source for the scene of the water miracle with the same arguments about the dating of the sources. He suggested that the image primarily exalts Peter, based on the Bible texts Matt 16.18 as well as 1 Cor 10.4 ("for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ").²⁰⁶ This interpretation seems rather implausible, since its highly metaphorical character is difficult to link to the early appearance of the scene, when theological treatises were not as widespread as in the second half of the fourth century (and thereafter). Moreover, it does not explain the presence of the soldiers. Nevertheless, the Bible text might have contributed to the popularity of the scene after it came in existence due to other factors.²⁰⁷

It is remarkable—as is signalled by several scholars—that the water miracle is not only often part of the Petrine trilogy (or at least combined with one other Petrine scene) but in more or less half of the instances is combined with the scene of the raising of Lazarus: both scenes are then mostly placed at the other ends of a sarcophagus. This position might have to do with the fact that the tomb of Lazarus as well as the rock of the water miracle are convenient scenes to close a row of images in a natural way. However, in the catacombs the two miracles are also connected: they are often depicted as pendants on the ceiling or above a doorpost. Therefore, although practical concerns might have been at stake, more substantive reasons also seem to have played a role.²⁰⁸ Since the raising of Lazarus obviously refers to the hope of resurrection (in the afterlife), the water miracle seems to symbolise the spiritual resurrection in the earthly life which is caused by baptism.²⁰⁹ Dresken-Weiland's table of scenes most frequently combined with the water miracle in the catacombs and on sarcophagi is illuminating:²¹⁰ the frequent combination of the water miracle and the raising of Lazarus in the catacombs might have contributed to their duo-appearance on sarcophagi. Other scenes, such as the *orans* and Multiplication of the loaves, are also frequently found in combination with the water miracle

206 For objections against the Processus-and-Martinianus interpretation, see Fabricius (1956) 97–103; Fabricius' own interpretation is found on p. 103. Cf. Pietri (1976) 337–8: he sees a reference to the exodus and to the *militia Christi* in the figures with *pileus pannonicus* (p. 339), but also to police officers arresting Peter (p. 349).

207 Matt 16.18 could of course also be one of the *raisons d'être* for the apocryphal story.

208 Van Moorsel (1965) 39–40.

209 Dresken-Weiland (2010) 132–4; Van Moorsel (1965) 36–41.

210 Dresken-Weiland (2010) 133.

in the catacombs and on sarcophagi alike. In the catacombs—as we have seen—the water miracle was connected with Moses (cf. two Old Testament scenes frequently occurring near the water miracle); on sarcophagi the figure of Peter was depicted as a thaumaturge. The arrest of Peter and the scene with Christ and the cock were also often associated with the water miracle. It seems that the primary meaning of spiritual resurrection became blurred with a willingness to depict different events in the life of the most important apostle, especially in Rome, where the Petrine trilogy was produced.

Comparable to its absence in prose, the water miracle is not referred to in poetry either. By contrast, another story about Peter in connection to water—his attempt to walk on the waves—was quite popular among early Christian poets. The absence of the water miracle might be part of a larger phenomenon: the lack of scenes with miracles performed by Peter in early Christian poetry. Only his conversation with the dog of Simon Magus could be considered as such, and this story was only found in Commodianus. Whereas the story in art was particularly suitable for filling the corner of a sarcophagus, which might have contributed to its popularity, in poetry it was not needed.

2.2.2.1.2 *Peter's Arrest*

Most of the scenes interpreted as Peter's arrest (see e.g. fig. 35) show a man who is taken along by two others, one on both sides; they are all walking to the right. The man in the middle is sometimes holding (or leaning on) a staff; he either looks backward or forward. The men who enclose him often bear a *pileus pannonicus* and sometimes hold a sword.²¹¹ The scene is only found on sarcophagi.

The main figure has the features of Peter, the two other men are clearly meant to be soldiers. This scene is depicted very often: of all scenes depicting an apostle as a main character only Peter's water miracle is shown considerably more frequently.²¹² Peter's arrest seems to foreshadow Peter's martyrdom, which is never depicted as such.

Georg Stuhlfauth has made an effort to categorise all different types of depictions of this scene and found four of them, which he meticulously tried to associate with apocryphal literature. He distinguished the depiction of Peter's "Verhaftung" (1a) and "Gefangenschaft" (1b) and Peter "zur Richtstätte" (11a)

²¹¹ See for an brief overview Koch (2000) 184–5.

²¹² Dresken-Weiland (2010) 139. Provoost (2011a) 48 counts 114 examples of Peter's arrest, mostly from the beginning of the fourth century, against 116 depictions of Peter with Christ and a cock (126 of Peter's water miracle, see id. 124).

and “auf der Richtstätte” (11b). He acknowledged that only 11a is easily recognisable (through the depiction of a cross).²¹³

Stuhlfauth provides 45 examples (from Rome, Gaul and Spain) of sarcophagi depicting 1a.²¹⁴ The main feature of this particular scene is that Peter looks backward. By contrast, on the 1b images, Peter looks forward (four examples, all from Rome).²¹⁵ 11a is characterised by the cross one soldier is bearing while Peter follows, caught by another soldier (three examples, from Rome and Gaul).²¹⁶ The last group of depictions of Peter’s arrest (11b) shows Peter on the place of his martyrdom: he is not longer moving forward, but standing still, flanked by two soldiers and awaiting his death (which is not necessarily indicated by anything else than the fact that the *martyrium* of Paul is depicted on the same sarcophagus or that a cross is depicted in the middle of the sarcophagus). Stuhlfauth mentions six examples of this type—from Rome, Milan and Gaul—the most famous one being the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus.²¹⁷

It seems that Stuhlfauth’s fondness of classification does not necessarily affect an analysis of the general interpretation of the scene. The types 1a, 1b and 11a all basically depict the same scene, and classifying the slight variances that occur seems to exaggerate the importance of small differences in images, which were probably due to the inventiveness of individual craftsmen. Type 11b seems to put a different emphasis, but even here the principal message is equal to that of the other types: Peter is on his way to martyrdom. Since Peter’s death is not depicted in early Christian art, all images of his arrest seem to have one key message: they indicate Peter’s martyrdom and the intercession

213 Stuhlfauth (1925) 72–125. The fragmentary transmission of apocryphal texts impedes a more precise interpretation and classification of the scenes, according to id., 113: “Unsere Unfähigkeit, auch sie (depictions not belonging to category 11a, *rd*) bis zum letzten zu fixieren, beruht vielmehr auf den Lücken unserer literarischen Überlieferung, die sich auch hier uns versagt, gelegentlich wohl auf einer gewissen Zwiespältigkeit dieser Überlieferung, mit der die Künstler sich auseinandersetzten.” Stuhlfauth’s emphasis on literary sources for the visualisation of Peter’s arrest seems to underestimate the possibility of slight variations made by the craftsmen on their own (for another example of Stuhlfauth’s exaggerated reliance on textual sources for visual elements see pp. 111–2). On the other hand, Stuhlfauth does not hesitate to explain the rare depiction of Peter’s arrest on the Jonah sarcophagus (Rep 1 35) by the craftsmen’s fantasy (p. 123): “Sonderlinge hat es in der Kunst immer gegeben, unter den Künstlern allerdings noch mehr als in der Kunst.”

214 Stuhlfauth (1925) 73–94.

215 Id. 95–101.

216 Id. 101–4.

217 Id. 104–10.

the apostle (as a saint in heaven) could make for the deceased who was buried in the sarcophagus.²¹⁸ This made the image particularly appropriate to depict in a funeral context. Some craftsmen varied on the basic type 11b, maybe meeting a specific request of the commissioner(s) of a sarcophagus or otherwise they were eager to leave their mark on the common image of Peter's martyrdom.

It does not seem necessary to pinpoint which arrest is depicted either. Stuhlfauth discusses the different arrests Peter faced in his life, as described in canonical and apocryphal books.²¹⁹ However, the viewer of a sarcophagus did not look at it with the texts at hand to check if everything was depicted in a correct (canonical) way and order. Since the image is seen in a funeral context and the martyrdom of Peter was of particular importance for many reasons, the scene was interpreted most probably as the arrest that immediately preceded Peter's death.²²⁰ Most often, the arrest is depicted on a sarcophagus that also shows the water miracle, suggesting that these scenes were closely connected.²²¹

Martine Dulaey has challenged the standard interpretations of the scene and interpreted it as Peter leading people to baptism. She only discusses scenes from the first half of the fourth century (on which Peter does not bear a cross). In her view, Peter symbolises the Church and the bishop, the soldiers represent catechumens dressed as *militia Christi*. Dulaey rightly points to aspects of the scene that do not seem to fit its interpretation as Peter's arrest: in most cases the soldiers do not bear a weapon and they hardly seem to touch Peter. The chronology of events is not always respected if the scene is combined with the water miracle: often, Peter and the soldiers walk away from the water miracle that was believed to have taken place after his arrest. Sometimes, a civilian is also carved out, who does not seem to have any place in the story of Peter's arrest. Dulaey also takes up the argument about the sources: the identification of the soldiers with Processus and Martinianus is problematic due to the late accounts of their story.²²²

218 Cf. Ficker (1887) 91.

219 Id. 119–20.

220 Dinkler (1939) 34 (note 1) and Fabricius (1956) 103–5 already rejected Stuhlfauth's hypothesis: Dinkler considered the distinction between 1a and 1b "nicht haltbar", Fabricius rejected Stuhlfauth's theory on other grounds: according to him, only the *Actus Vercellenses* (or *Actus Petri cum Simone*) were known in the fourth century, which would exclude confusion among connoisseurs of the apocryphal tradition. On pp. 105–6 Fabricius tries to explain the peculiarities of 1a and 11a with references to the apocryphal acts, but his arguments are not convincing.

221 See Sotomayor (1983) 202.

222 Dulaey (2008) 308–24. Her analysis is based on 54 sarcophagi "(...) presque toujours complets et en suffisamment bon état pour être significatifs (...)" (p. 304).

Dulaey's alternative interpretation is based on a detailed reading of theological treatises revealing peculiarities especially about the movement, its direction and the grasping of the catechumen's hand during the early Christian baptismal ceremony.²²³ Although several aspects of the scene of Peter and the soldiers are comparable to those of early Christian baptismal ritual, these aspects are all rather general (walking, going to the right, touching): the scene called Peter's arrest is primarily characterised by Peter and the soldiers. It is highly improbable that any viewer of the scene would be able to arrive at Dulaey's interpretation, using—as she does—several theological treatises and much allegorical exegesis. If designed as Dulaey assumes, the image simply would not work. Moreover, the scene of the arrest is not about an arrest in general: it is about the arrest of Peter, the most important apostle of Christianity according to late antique Christians. The scene of Peter's arrest might fit the tendency towards reluctance in the depiction of violence in images of Christ and the apostles in early Christian art.²²⁴ It might also have been considered to add to the glory of the apostle, because he seems to follow voluntarily those who came to arrest him. The civilian who is sometimes present at the arrest can be interpreted as having the same function as the apostles present at Christ's miracles on early Christian sarcophagi: witnessing the event and 'proving' its authenticity. Processus and Martinianus might have been more important in the water miracle scene than in the scene of Peter's arrest. However, it is not improbable that a story existed in which the soldiers who had arrested and were guarding Peter were baptised. This story might have been included in the biography of Processus and Martinianus at a later stage.²²⁵ Apparently, a certain freedom existed in the carving of the scene of Peter's arrest. Perhaps some of Dulaey's considerations did play a minor role in the design of the scene, but the image primarily seems to evoke Peter's arrest and therewith his martyrdom (see below).

Dresken-Weiland suggested that the scene is more about conversion than about Peter's arrest.²²⁶ She does so because of the gestures of speech made by

223 Id. 328–46.

224 The use of violence in early Christian art is referred to by id. 314–5, but as an argument against the interpretation of an arrest because she sees violence as a common part of early Christian art. However, the images of Peter, Paul and Christ show less violence and ignore a concrete depiction of their martyrdom, see below.

225 Dulaey herself points to the fact that later sources can reveal information about an earlier date when it does fit her own argument on p. 328 (note 137).

226 Dresken-Weiland (2011a) 133–6 and Dresken-Weiland (2010) 136–9. She does mention the apocryphal texts describing an arrest of Peter in Dresken-Weiland (2011b) 71 (note 86). Although she does not refer to him, Dresken-Weiland arrives at the same conclusions as Sotomayor (1962b): see his concluding remarks on p. 63.

Peter on many sarcophagi and the juxtaposition of the scene of Peter's arrest to the water miracle, which, according to Dresken-Weiland, refers to the baptism of his jailors. However, her arguments are not compelling. It seems reasonable to depict an innocent person who is arrested (verbally) objecting his arrest: hypothesising an act of conversion is thus not necessary.²²⁷ Another argument in favour of Dresken-Weiland's hypothesis is that Peter often holds a scroll or a *virga*, referring to his role as preacher and miracle worker. However, both attributes could have been added to the representation of Peter in order to support identification or even for mere decoration (at the same time suggesting of course that Peter was a wonder-doer, in case of the *uirga*, or a learned man in the apostolic tradition, in case of the scroll).²²⁸ The object might be a reference to the (pious) activities that Peter performed when he was arrested and thus emphasise his innocence.

The arrest is linked to the water miracle (maybe even more so by the *virga*), since it appears without the miracle on sarcophagi on a few occasions only.²²⁹ Sotomayor and Dresken-Weiland seem to be right in emphasising the aspect of conversion looming behind both scenes. The fact that conversion in the form of baptism was already depicted in the water miracle seems to imply that the other scene's traditional interpretation as Peter's arrest is correct. The (apocryphal) traditions about Peter's life, recording his arrest and his stay in prison, were necessary to evoke the idea of conversion.²³⁰ Most people who were less

227 Cf. Pietri (1976) 341, *pace* Sotomayor (1962b) 60, who already suggested that the gestures did mean an act of conversion.

228 See Dinkler (1939) 63–4 for the *virga/virgule* in pre-Christian times. It is the first attribute linked to specific figures, namely to Moses, Christ and Peter, see Schäfer (1936) 68.

229 Nine out of 59 instances, according to Sotomayor (1962b) 57. He calls the scene of the arrest an “amplificación” (p. 57) of the water miracle scene. From the entire corpus of depictions of the water miracle, these scenes appear more or less as often with as without the scene of Peter's arrest, see *id.* 56.

230 Sotomayor (1962b) 58–60 suggests a more specific reference to apocryphal sources: the oldest depictions of the scene of the arrest show Peter running away from the water miracle; this would visualise the story of Peter's jailors trying to convince the apostle to flee from prison (*Martyrium Petri* 4–5). The most conspicuous example would be Lat. 119 (the Jonah sarcophagus, Rep1 35), which has a unique image of people lying at Peter's feet while he seems to flee some soldiers. Fabricius (1956) 105–6 sees on this sarcophagus a reference to *Martyrium Petri* 7, which tells how people want to take Peter away from his jailors. Sotomayor points to the military outfit of the people lying on the ground, but they do not wear a *pileus pannonicus*, which makes this interpretation less likely. Cf. also Dresken-Weiland (2010) 120, note 136. Another group of sarcophagi depicts Peter being arrested faced towards the water miracle: these are from a later date. Sotomayor hypothesises that the original meaning was not understood anymore at that time and that the scene was now interpreted as a mere depiction of Peter's arrest. The evidence seems too

acquainted with the stories about Peter would therefore interpret the scene first and foremost as what it seems to be at first sight: an arrest of the apostle. Logically, they would think of the most famous one, leading to the apostle's martyrdom. This is confirmed by the fact that the scene of Peter's arrest—if not depicted with the water miracle—is often on the so-called “passion sarcophagi”:²³¹ soldiers do not bear a *pileus pannonicus*, but the context makes clear that an arrest leading to martyrdom is intended.

For those who designed the images and for a small group with a better knowledge of scripture and adjacent traditions, both the more plain and the more symbolical meaning were understood and gave meaning to the picture.

Peter's arrest is not specifically mentioned in early Christian poetry, but poets referred to his martyrdom in other ways: they mentioned the place where Peter died, the emperor who executed him, the martyr crown he had deserved (cf. 2.2.2.1.3), or his actual death. Poets did not need to explicitly refer to the arrest in order to evoke the apostle's death (cf. 2.2.2.2.2).

2.2.2.1.3 The ‘Peter Reading’ Scene

Another scene of much debated origin is that of a man sitting on a rock (or a stool), reading a scroll or codex while another man is standing in front of him. Occasionally, more persons are involved in the scene, in particular a man observing the others in the foreground from behind a tree (the so-called brother sarcophagus—Rep1 45—provides the best example).²³²

The seated man has generally been interpreted as Peter, whereas the other men are considered to be soldiers. They are most often depicted wearing the *pileus pannonicus* that was typical for late antique soldiers, whose clothes often revealed non-Roman influences in that period.²³³ There seems to be

little, however, to confirm such a precise reference to apocryphal sources (cf. Stuhlfauth's classification of the scene discussed above).

231 Koch (2000) 185.

232 Koch (2000) 185–6. Dresken-Weiland (2010) 141 mentions only 12 examples of this image on sarcophagi, but Wischmeyer (1979), whom she refers to, lists 23 of them (specifications on pp. 484–5): eleven from Rome and twelve from the south of France. Provoost (2011a) 82 lists six examples on sarcophagi from Rome. Stuhlfauth (1925) 38–40 divides the scene in six different types, but this division does not seem to contribute to a better comprehension of its meaning.

233 MacMullen (1964) 446 (note 64 in particular); Sotomayor (1962b) 50. The famous statue of the four tetrarchs in Venice shows the emperors bearing a *pileus pannonicus*, cf. Pietri (1976) 331.

no written source for this image, at least no one has been preserved.²³⁴ As a result, a wide range of interpretations has been proposed.²³⁵ Dresken-Weiland seems right in her interpretation of the scene as depicting Peter catechizing, while the soldiers are attentively listening to him.²³⁶ This seems more plausible than the idea that Peter reads his *capias*,²³⁷ since there is no reason for any soldier to hide behind a tree when someone reads a warrant. Moreover, Dresken-Weiland's interpretation also accounts for the different attitudes the soldiers show in these scene: sometimes they seem to listen reverently, in other instances they seem to be more aggressive.²³⁸

The Peter reading scene ("Leseszene" as it is called in the abundant scholarly literature in German) often appears with the trilogy of Peter and is found from the second decennium of the fourth century onwards until the beginning of the fifth century. Possible reasons for the depiction of the scene depend of course of its interpretation. If Peter's arrest is shown on the same sarcophagus, the Peter reading scene could be a prelude to the well-known image of Peter being taken away by (in most of the cases) two soldiers, probably towards his martyrdom. A reference to Peter's arrest seems plausible, but the emphasis of the scene seems to be on catechisation (or, less appropriately, on preaching or on personal reflection by the apostle);²³⁹ the reason to depict the scene must thus be found elsewhere.

234 The existence of a written source has been postulated by Stuhlfauth (1925) 47. However, given the rather general nature of the image (a man reading, other men listening), a (written or oral) narrative source does not seem necessary.

235 Cf. Dresken-Weiland (2010) 143: "Verschiedentlich wurde die Haltung der Soldaten herangezogen, um zu Deutungen der Szene zu gelangen. Diese Deutungen spiegeln eher die persönlichen Sichtweisen und Eindrücke der jeweiligen Interpreten wieder." Tristan (1996) 403 proposes what is probably the most original (and unlikely) interpretation: "(...) la lutte de chrétiens révoltés contre le pape Damase, successeur de Pierre, et tentant de lui dérober la Loi."

236 Dresken-Weiland (2010) 141–3.

237 See e.g. Wischmeyer (1979) 488.

238 See Sotomayor (1962b) 62. He distinguishes two options: the soldiers are either converted and friendly or pagan and hostile. But if the emphasis is on the act of converting itself, one would rather expect to see unconverted soldiers who are either favourable or ill-disposed towards the preaching apostle.

239 De Bruyne (1969) 72–7 refers to an example where Peter seems to be buried in a book, while two soldiers and Christ stand around him: although De Bruyne considers this scene to be a scene of personal reading instead of reading aloud, the prostrating figure at Peter's feet implies interaction with the bystanders. Christ might be depicted to emphasise that it is his message that is read (note also the christogram on the book that Peter is reading). The sarcophagus concerned is Rep3 35 or Benoit (1954) no. 53 (p. 52).

Dresken-Weiland suggested that the sarcophagi with this particular image were mainly ordered by soldiers, who played an increasingly important role in Roman government from the third century onwards. They would have wanted to depict themselves being converted by the most important apostle. Or they represented the Roman administration in general.²⁴⁰ However, since the scene of Peter's arrest is often depicted with the reading scene and the soldiers are depicted in the same way in both images, this argument would also imply that the deceased deliberately linked himself to those who led Peter to his martyrdom. Although Peter's martyrdom certainly added to his prestige as a saint, it is difficult to assume that someone celebrated his conversion to Christianity by emphasising his connection with the apprehension of the apostle Peter. Apart from that, many high officials in the late fourth century already came from Christian families: conversion was an issue that was less relevant than it had been before.

The scene of reading Peter seems to be more safely interpreted as an image showing the apostle as a wise man (like the ancient philosophers),²⁴¹ who impressed even soldiers who were about to lead him to his place of martyrdom. The apocryphal legends about Processus and Martinianus—the two jailors whom Peter converted in prison—might have contributed to the inclusion of soldiers in the scene.²⁴² In general, Paul was considered the most philosopher-like apostle since he was known to have been a learned man. Peter and the other apostles were depicted as philosophers indeed, but originally they were fishermen without much education (according to Acts 4.13). However, the conspicuous depiction of Peter as a philosopher might have been at least partly inspired by a desire to let him outdo Paul even in this respect. Peter in the reading scene also resembles the muses or deceased, who are often depicted on sarcophagi:²⁴³ in both ways, the representation of Peter is anchored in an existing tradition.

It has been suggested that the tree in the Peter reading scene is a reference to the terebinth associated with the place of Peter's martyrdom.²⁴⁴ Although

²⁴⁰ Dresken-Weiland (2010) 145–6.

²⁴¹ Cf. Dresken-Weiland (2011a) 138.

²⁴² It seems unnecessary to postulate that Processus and Martinianus are the soldiers depicted in the reading scene, which is done in TIP 259 s.v. Pietro (Bisconti).

²⁴³ This has been noticed by most scholars discussing the scene. Important contributions include: Dresken-Weiland (2011a), (2011b) and (2010) 141–3; Wischmeyer (1979); Dinkler (1939) 64–70 and 77–8; Stuhlfauth (1925) 35–50. See also TIP 258–9 s.v. Pietro (Bisconti) and Fabricius (1956) 96–7.

²⁴⁴ Cf. Dinkler (1939) 78: “Auch der auf der Szene mitdargestellte Baum zwingt nicht zur lokalen Begrenzung, er kann aus vorkonstantinischen Bildtypen der Lesekomposition

this is a tempting suggestion (especially in the light of indications for the place of Paul's martyrdom that are depicted on sarcophagi, in contrast with those of Peter, see below), it seems to be too far-fetched. The tree would be more appropriate in the scene of Peter's arrest (see 2.2.2.1.2). In the only elaborate description of Peter's martyrdom, Prudentius' *perist.* 12, a tree occurs, albeit a olive tree, not a terebinth, without any connection made with Peter's death: it is mentioned for its symbolical meaning.²⁴⁵ Moreover, the olive tree was not only used in the scene of Peter reading, but also in some depictions of the water miracle, which contributed to the unity between these two Petrine images.²⁴⁶ The tree therefore seems to be nothing more than a ornamental feature. In contrast, the rock that in most cases is used as a seat for Peter might have reminded the viewer of Matt 16.18 ("you are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church");²⁴⁷ it would then also reinforce the idea that Peter reads a Christian holy text instead of an administrative piece of paperwork.

It is unclear why the image of reading Peter occurs relatively often in Gaul: it is obvious that the scene raised interest among the elite in that region,²⁴⁸ but a real explanation has not been given and is hard to provide indeed.

The sarcophagus of the Dioscuri (fig. 36–7) shows a remarkable example of the scene of reading Peter.²⁴⁹ Firstly, Peter is depicted with his legs crossed (fig. 37). Secondly, and more interestingly, he is depicted on the short side of a coffin that has the two Dioscuri on the front (fig. 36), surrounding scenes depicting the deceased. Here the connection between Peter and the Dioscuri is

ohne besonderen Sinn übernommen sein." The suggestion about the terebinth was made by Wischmeyer (1979). He notices that trees also occur in the pagan forerunners of the scene, see id. 489; probably craftsmen took the idea of depicting a tree from these sarcophagi.

245 *Perist.* 31–4. According to Fux (2003) 423 the olive tree symbolises paradise in this passage. Moreover, it provided the main ingredient for baptismal anointment.

246 Stuhlfauth (1925) 66–7.

247 Sometimes Peter is seated on a *sella* or *cathedra*. Pace TIP 8,259 s.v. Pietro (Bisconti), Dresken-Weiland (2010) 142 (note 241) rightly sees too few cases to assume a direct link to the feast of the *cathedra Petri*. For Peter and rocks in art see also Wilpert (1938) 175–8.

248 Dresken-Weiland (2010) 143. She tries to explain the relative rareness of depiction by the technical complexities of the scene (especially the tree), and because of the redundancy of the image (since an image of Peter's arrest already existed), see p. 144 (or Dresken-Weiland (2011a) 138). This might be linked to the fact that no textual source supported the image directly: this might have caused confusion about the actual meaning and made it less recognisable (modern discussions about its interpretation might partly reveal the ambiguity the scene had already in antiquity).

249 Rep3 51/Benoit (1954) 33 (no. 1).

most tangible: it is remarkable that they receive the most prominent position on the front of the sarcophagus. Apparently, for the deceased, both pagan and Christian heroes could support the dead, but the Dioscuri maybe even better than the apostle. A comparable object is a lost earthenware plate from Africa with the Dioscuri depicted in the middle and the twelve apostles depicted standing on the rim.²⁵⁰ In poetry, Peter and Paul might have been compared to the Dioscuri in an indirect way in Damasus' *ep.* 20 (see. 1.5.2). In this poem, Peter and Paul are called "new stars". In art, the apostles were sometimes depicted with stars, e.g. on Rep1 31 (fig. 38). However, these stars are decorative rather than referring to a pagan symbol. On the same fragment, the apostles are crowned by the hand of God, as a reference to their martyrdom.

In general, the combination of pagan and Christian imagery in art does occur (cf. e.g. the Lipsanoteca from Brescia), but in poetry it is much more common:²⁵¹ pagan literature and mythology are referred to by means of intertextuality in almost every Christian poem.²⁵²

2.2.2.1.4 *The Petrine Trilogy in Context*

With the scene of Peter, Christ and the cock (see 2.1.3.1.1), Peter's arrest and the water miracle are the Petrine images that are depicted most often. The reading scene occurs less frequently. Erich Dinkler has tried to come to a better understanding of the development of Petrine imagery by closely analysing these images, using a Lachmanian stemma normally used to determine the relationship between manuscripts. He found that the scenes of the water miracle, the arrest and the scene with the cock were designed all at once (in a archetype) and formed a trilogy from the beginning (first decennium of the fourth century). The reading scene was added at a later stage.²⁵³ Manuel Sotomayor, however, argued that the scene of Peter, Christ and the cock was designed slightly

250 The so-called "plat de Mouzaïaville", see Béjaoui (1985), *fig.* 1 (p. 174). Béjaoui also mentions a similar "plat du musée Benaki" with the same depiction of the Dioscuri and a rim with wild beasts and other secular decoration. Again, these examples seem to indicate that pagan/secular and Christian imagery was used by the same workshops. Cf. also Buschhausen (1971) 122–4 for an example of syncretism on a *scrinium* (B60).

251 Traditional imagery in a broader sense is of course seen more often in Christian art, e.g. on the Junius Bassus sarcophagus or the Lipsanoteca, see Suzawa (2008) 97–111.

252 The didactic poetry of Gregory of Nazianzus and Amphilochius could partly count as an exception. Christian poetical culture seems to have been more developed in the West than in the East in the third and fourth centuries.

253 Dinkler (1939). For some important conclusions see pp. 48–9, for the date see p. 59. Dinkler could not find an archetype for the sarcophagi with two zones of scenes, see his elucidation to "Tabelle v".

later than the combination of the visualisation of the arrest and the water miracle (supplemented with the reading scene). It seems impossible to trace the Petrine imagery back to archetypes. It is sure, however, that Dinkler's trilogy of the scenes of the arrest, the water miracle and the cock—connected through their central themes of conversion and mercy—soon became very popular in early Christian art. Sotomayor saw a direct link to the social-historical circumstances of the fourth century in which these themes were topicalities.²⁵⁴ In the second half of the fourth century—when the individual scenes were still depicted, albeit in a lower frequency—the meaning of the images seems to have shifted to a direct reference to events that characterised Peter's life.²⁵⁵

Jutta Dresken-Weiland wondered why Peter was introduced in the repertoire of images on sarcophagi at all, since baptism was already 'covered' in early Christian art by the depiction of the baptism of Christ and salvation by the water miracle performed by Moses.²⁵⁶ However, the act of converting lacked a consistent visual formula. Moreover, people probably could identify more easily with other human beings than with the Son of God (cf. the miracle scenes on sarcophagi, which probably expressed the wish that the deceased was healed spiritually by God). Therefore, the water miracle was more apt to be depicted than the story of the baptism of Christ, which was only rarely translated into art indeed. Furthermore, Peter was a more appealing figure to the upper class of Rome than Moses, a prophet from a far-away country, who was already known from the Jewish religion to which the newly converted aristocrats of Rome did not belong and had no intention to adhere. Dresken-Weiland sees in Peter's presence on sarcophagi—the only medium on which Peter is depicted significantly more often than Paul—proof for the Christianisation of the Roman elite.²⁵⁷ According to her, Peter was the most attractive apostle for aristocrats since he was the head of the apostles.

This last argument seems debatable, since Paul was (with Peter) the founder of the Roman Christian community through his martyrdom and the leader of the first Christian communities described in the Bible. Moreover, as an intellectual Paul potentially was more appealing a saint for well-educated people

254 Sotomayor (1962b) 63–4.

255 This development fitted a general shift towards narrative scenes in early Christian art at the end of the fourth century, continuing in the fifth and sixth centuries, see Sotomayor (1962b) 20.

256 Dresken-Weiland (2010) 144.

257 Id. 145. Dresken-Weiland (2011a) is more or less similar. More in general on issues concerning sarcophagi and the status of sarcophagus-burying: Dresken-Weiland (2003).

than the fisherman Peter.²⁵⁸ However, the particular status of Peter in the city of Rome made him an attractive subject on sarcophagi of the elite. From the end of the second century onwards, the commemoration of deceased bishops was stirred in Rome and also the idea that the Roman see had its origins in especially Peter's (and to a lesser degree Paul's) presence in Rome. The *natale Petri de cathedra* was a feast day celebrating the accession of the first bishop from around the year 300 onwards.²⁵⁹ Subsequently, the basilica of saint Peter was the place where many administrators were buried: its important position only reinforced the tendency of exalting Peter that was already at work.

2.2.2.2 Other Non-Canonical Images of the Apostles

Most of the other non-canonical scenes in art and poetry concern Peter. In the case of Paul, Andrew and Bartholomew, only one story in this category is found. The other individual apostles are entirely absent from this kind of imagery. The twelve as a group, as well as Peter and Paul, are sometimes referred to in a symbolical way. Although these representations are not the primary focus of this investigation, it seems useful to at least mention them, in order to present a more comprehensive overview of the apostolic presence in art and poetry.

2.2.2.2.1 *The Encounter of Peter and Paul*

Two examples of a meeting of Peter and Paul embracing each other remain from the fourth century.²⁶⁰ Some apocryphal sources describe a meeting at the arrival of Paul in Rome.²⁶¹ It cannot be known with certainty which one—if any—is referred to in the images that remain, but the complete lack of any indication of an impending martyrdom might imply that it is the encounter at Paul's arrival in Rome. It is also possible that the encounter is an amplification of the *concordia apostolorum* theme, which was not influenced by one specific apocryphal source.

In the catacomb of the “ex Vigna Chiaraviglio”, Peter and Paul are depicted (with their faces portrayed in the usual way) with a palm tree to the left and to the right of them (fig. 39). Two men are flanking the scene. On the copy of a

258 This idea finds affirmation in the fact that more senatorial inscriptions were found in the San Paolo than in the San Pietro, see Dresken-Weiland (2003) 147.

259 Dinkler (1939) 69–70; cf. LThK 1 s.v. Apostelfeste (Dürig).

260 Discussion in Uggeri (2010) 219–25. Kessler (1987) is entirely devoted to the scene, but Kessler does not mention a catacomb painting nor a bas-relief dating from the fourth century.

261 See Uggeri (2010) 220.

lost fresco from the San Paolo fuori le Mura two men occur, but no palm trees.²⁶² On a bas-relief dated around the year 400, from Aquileia, the two apostles are portrayed facing each other in close-up with only their faces and shoulders carved out: Peter's hand on Paul's shoulder assures the interpretation of the apostles' meeting. An often mentioned belt buckle from Castellamare di Stabia is from the fifth century: Paul is shown here on the left (in contrast with the bas-relief and the fresco) and no details are added. The idea of *concordia apostolorum* is of course an evident explanation for the choice of this imagery.²⁶³

Although the *concordia apostolorum* was expressed in several ways in poetry, an encounter of Peter and Paul was never described. Together with the general lack of apocryphal scenes in early Christian art and the lack of any direct source, this probably means that the scene was an expression of the emphasis on the unity between Peter and Paul rather than a representation of the apocryphal stories mentioned above.²⁶⁴

2.2.2.2.2 *The Martyrdom of Peter and Paul*

It appeared from the investigation of early Christian poetry that the story of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul in Rome was by far the most popular non-canonical story referred to in verses. Therefore, depictions of the events related to the martyrdom of Peter and Paul offer a rare opportunity to directly compare the way in which these are used in art and poetry.

The most important poems discussing the martyrdom are Ambrose's 12th hymn and *Peristephanon* 12. The latter is considerably longer than the hymn of Ambrose²⁶⁵ and pays particular attention to the main places of veneration of Peter and Paul in Rome around the year 400: the basilicas of Saint Peter and Saint Paul.²⁶⁶ Both Ambrose and Prudentius describe the martyrdom of the two apostles, but they emphasise different aspects: most conspicuous is the

262 See Guj (2002).

263 Furthermore, for the belt buckle see Kessler (1987) 267: "The Meeting of Peter and Paul, a theme of joining, seems particularly appropriate for a belt buckle (...)." Both Kessler and Uggeri refer to the similar idea of *concordia apostolorum* and *concordia augustorum* as expressed in the famous statue of the four tetrarchs embracing each other in Venice. Cf. Lønstrup (2010).

264 Bisconti (2002) 1648–52 suggests that images of the meeting of Peter and Paul were derived from larger depictions serving as church decoration. He explains the scene as an expression of *concordia apostolorum* and *renouatio urbis*.

265 33 distichs consisting of an archilochian verse with dactylic tetrameter and *ithyphallicus* and a iambic trimeter vs. 32 iambic dimeters.

266 In general, Prudentius shows more interest in the places of martyrdom and tombs of martyrs in his poetry, cf. Norberg (1974) 151–3.

lack of a description of Paul's death in Ambrose's hymn, although it is devoted to both apostles (for which see esp. vv. 1–4 and 9–10).²⁶⁷ Prudentius mentions the sword with which Paul is decapitated (v. 9) and describes his death extensively in vv. 21–8; he versifies the account of Peter's death in vv. 11–20.

These examples already point to the most conspicuous difference between early Christian poetry and art in this respect: the depiction of martyrdom proper never occurs. Only references to the martyrdom of both of the principal apostles exist. The way the apostles died is visualised by a cross borne by Peter (sometimes by a soldier who accompanies him) and a sword held by a soldier next to Paul.²⁶⁸ On the sarcophagus of the Anastasis, found in the *hypogaeum* of the *confessio* of the basilica of Saint Paul, Peter's arrest is shown on the left, a cross in the middle, with two soldiers and a christogram, and on the right the martyrdom of Paul: although the actual martyrdom of Peter is not represented here, the sequence 'arrest—cross—martyrdom of Paul' is suggestive.²⁶⁹ Moreover, it is an example of the way many sarcophagi referred to the martyrdom of both Peter and Paul.²⁷⁰

But the most remarkable aspect of Peter's martyrdom—his crucifixion upside down, described by both poets—was never expressed in early Christian art. Even on reliquaries—plausibly the first place to expect them—images of martyrdom are absent.²⁷¹ In a similar way, the suffering that the martyrdom would have caused to the apostles is not described in poetry either (the emphasis being on the glorious triumph over death). There was reluctance among

267 Damasus *ep.* 1 also omits references to the death of Paul, see 1.5.4.

268 See Shanzer (2010) for a general discussion of the depiction of martyrdom in early Christian art; cf. Schäfer (1936) and Fux (2003) 36–8. Shanzer links the idea of depicting the instruments of torture to Ausonius' *Cupido cruciatus* and points to pagan examples. She argues that these have been an impediment for the development of comparable Christian imagery, although in other instances pagan themes and ideas are avidly used in early Christian art. For Peter with a cross see e.g. fig. 43, but also the possible fragment of an oil lamp in Sena Chiesa (2012) cat. no. 75. Sometimes a sword is also depicted to indicate Peter's martyrdom, see Koch (2000) 185; see id. 188 for the *martyrium Petri* and p. 189 for the *martyrium Pauli*. It is not before the sixth or seventh centuries that Peter is depicted on the cross, see Cartlidge & Elliott (2001) 169. The ICA contains a possible reference to Peter's crucifixion from the Callixtus catacombs which has probably been lost (31R76Gelx25.14).

269 See Uggeri (2010) 229–31 (Rep1 61). Other sarcophagi on which the martyrdom of Peter and Paul is depicted are Rep3 297 and Rep3 55.

270 For the martyrdom of Peter and Paul depicted alongside each other, see the unfinished sarcophagus front of Rep1 189.

271 Kalinowski (2011) 174–8. Cf. Bisconti (2009a) 171–2.

early Christian craftsmen to depict suffering and mutilation in scenes of saints, and in those of the most venerable Biblical characters Christ, Peter and Paul in particular.²⁷² The Lipsanoteca is exceptional also in this respect, since it visualises the death of both Judas and Ananias (fig. 15). However, these depictions of dead apostates of the (right) Christian faith only confirm the emphasis on triumphalism in Christian art (especially in the Theodosian period).

Although martyrdom was generally accepted as a merit in the fourth century, visualisations of martyrdom were still deemed too explicit for late antique art, that was firmly rooted in classical culture. In this culture existed different concepts of the afterlife and the nature of gods and heroes. Therefore, both art and poetry shared the same unease about martyrdom, although poets dared to describe more than is depicted. But poetry did so only in specific cases: the reluctance regarding the apostles and Christ contrasts the descriptions of martyrdom of other Christian martyrs. The cruel death of Cassianus in *Peristephanon* 9,43–84 is a most gruesome example.

The details of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul that are provided by Ambrose and Prudentius are different. Prudentius is more descriptive: he mentions the exact location of the martyrdom on the bank of the Tiber (vv. 7–10) and the time when this took place: Nero is mentioned in v. 11 and again in v. 23, probably to emphasise that the apostles died shortly after each other. Verse 27 sums up the

272 Fabricius (1956) 106 saw a depiction of Peter and Paul in prison in the left scene of Rep I 781, but the faces of the two kneeling men, maltreated by two other men, do not exactly correspond to those of Peter and Paul on the right side of the sarcophagus. Provoost (2011b) 190 interprets the scene as the punishment of the elders from the story of Susanna, like Koch (2000), who emphasises the difficulties with interpreting scenes from the Susanna story on p. 254. This interpretation would be in line with the evidence from the Lipsanoteca. Biblical characters that were saved before they died were frequently depicted, e.g. the offer by Abraham and the three boys in the fiery furnace. It has been claimed that there are a few magical *gemmae* depicting Christ's crucifixion from the second or third century, see Harley (2006) 225, but *contra* TIP 160 s.v. Croce (Felle) and Engemann (2011) 208. Some better known examples date from the end of the fourth century, see Elsner (2011) and Harley (2012) 321–5. Cf. Staats (2008) 352–3 about the prohibition of crucifixion by Constantine. The martyrdom of Achilleus is depicted on a relief from the Chiesa dei Santi Nereo e Achilleo (a soldier raises his hand for the mortal blow): Nicolai, Bisconti et al. (2000) 106 (fig. 20). Cf. e.g. the painting of martyrdom under the Ss. Giovanni e Paolo (Webb (2010) 103–4), a possible martyr scene from the catacombs discussed in Ensoli & La Rocca (2000), no. 298, and a bowl base with a *datio ad bestias* referred to in Buzov (2010) 316. Possible examples from the Santa Thecla catacombs, Achilleus, and three bowls are included in Sena Chiesa (2012) cat. nos. 17–21. Sources such as Asterius' eleventh homily also confirm that cruel scenes were sometimes depicted, see e.g. Van der Meer & Bartelink (1976) 30–5.

events in staccato: *Nec mora, protrahitur, poenae datur, inmolatur ense* ‘without delay, he is dragged along, he is given to punishment and murdered by sword’. All this is absent in Ambrose. However, the bishop of Milan does mention that the martyrdom took place in Rome (12,21, cf. *perist.* 12,2). Furthermore, both poets mention the martyrs’ blood, which brought triumph (*perist.* 12,4—hymn 12,3; 6 and 23). The crowns worn by the apostles (*perist.* 12,6—hymn 12,4 and 8) primarily have a symbolical meaning. These are all general features of the cult of the saints that reached a particular popularity during the lives of the poets.

Prudentius’ mentioning of the river Tiber is sometimes equalled in art by the depiction of a ship and reed indicating the place of Paul’s martyrdom (fig. 40);²⁷³ the precise place of Peter’s death is not visualised. On one sarcophagus, from Berja, Nero seems to be depicted (fig. 41).²⁷⁴ If he was recognised as such, this would be the only example of an indication of the time when the apostles’ execution took place and might indicate a direct link to the *Acta Apostolorum Petri et Pauli*, but only if the story was already known by then.

Although the seated person is not recognisable as Nero but rather as an anonymous magistrate—comparable to other ‘bad characters’ in early Christian iconography like Nebuchadnezzar—, it must be Nero in this context, since the two people brought before him look like Peter and Paul, even if the sarcophagus is dated in the period 325–335, when a fixed iconography for Peter and Paul had not yet fully been developed.²⁷⁵ Although it is difficult to be sure about the identity of the seated man, it is even more difficult to explain this scene by another story than that of the conviction of Peter and Paul.²⁷⁶ Depicting a Roman emperor in the scene of martyrdom of the apostles might have gone too far, especially from Constantine onwards when the emperor was Christian and could take this as an insult to his office. Alternatively, the identity of the judge was not important, because the image in any case primarily exalts the saints

273 This is a counterexample to the idea that plants in early Christian art in most cases have a purely decorative or allegorical function, which was shown above. See also Stuhlfauth (1925) 66–7 (on the Peter reading and water miracle scenes).

274 S576/Sotomayor (1975) no. 16. See Janssens (2011) 167–8, Uggeri (2010) 225–8 and Bovini (1954) 150–5. The sarcophagus from Berja is now in the Museo Arqueológico Nacional in Madrid. Cf. also the *Decretum Gelasianum* (3,2) for the idea that Peter and Paul died on the same day in the same year, see De Santos Otero (1999⁶) 395–6.

275 Sotomayor (1975) 106, dating on p. 107. Janssens (2011) 167 dates the sarcophagus to the years 337–340 and considers it the first depiction of Peter and Paul together without Christ.

276 Eastman (2011) 152; Sotomayor (1975) 105–7, cf. his judgement of the interpretation of this scene as the conviction of Peter and Paul by Nero (p. 106): “Pero, aunque no se pueda admitir el argumento, se acepta la intuición; es la única interpretación plausible.”

Peter and Paul. In poetry, however, the emperor involved in Peter's and Paul's execution could be called by name, thus avoiding any association with the contemporary emperor.²⁷⁷

Comparable to the visual depiction, the poetical descriptions of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul do not provide many details: although Prudentius describes the martyrdom more elaborately, even he—in a hymn devoted to the feast day of the two apostles—could have made more out of the legends circulating about the apostles' death. This becomes particularly apparent when we compare it to the (admittedly extraordinary) long hymn for the Roman martyr Lawrence, which comprises 584 verses (*perist.* 2).

Apparently, both in poetry and art, the key message sufficed: Peter and Paul underwent martyrdom, which—in addition to their special status as the main apostles and founders of (especially) the Christian community in Rome—made them important intercessors on behalf of the death. The same tendency can be discerned in patristic literature.

The most direct references to the martyrdom of Peter and Paul in art are thus images on which the apostles are shown with attributes indicating their martyrdom—a cross or sword respectively. However, these scenes do not occur very often.²⁷⁸

The depiction of the arrest of one of the apostles (even without direct references to their death) calls their martyrdom to mind. However, the martyrdom itself in a way was more popular in poetry than in early Christian art, since almost all poets mentioned it, although often in a brief note only (Juvenecus and Proba were unable to refer to it, since they exclusively versified parts of the Bible). The poets nearly always mention the death of both apostles together. A similar pattern is sometimes visible in art when the 'arrest' of both apostles

277 In poetical references to the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, other than those by Ambrose and Prudentius, Nero is mentioned by Commodianus (*Carmen apologeticum* 827) and Prudentius *c. Symm.* 2,669–70. Gregory of Nazianzus does not mention him (11,1,14, 64). For an overview see Schubert (1998) 371–96: although Nero is for late antique poets “in der Regel kein Thema” (p. 371), Nero is nearly always linked to the martyrdom of Peter and Paul by Christian poets, if he is mentioned (see p. 387). For Nero in Christian literature in general see *id.* 245–9. A remarkable appearance of Nero in early Christian literature is offered by John Chrysostom, who compares the emperor to his victim, Paul. He does not refrain from praising Nero first, before arriving—unsurprisingly—at the conclusion that Paul surpassed him, see *Hom. in 2 Tim.* 4, 3–4, commentary in Mitchell (2000) 206–12.

278 Provoost (2011a) 72 (Paul). Koch (2000) mentions Peter's *martyrium* on p. 188, Paul's on p. 189. In the *Dominus legem dat* scene, Peter also often bears a cross, but the emphasis in this scene is clearly on Christ, as has been argued above. Therefore, the cross might as well have been associated to the crucifixion of Christ as to that of Peter.

is shown on the same sarcophagus, in different scenes (e.g. the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus, Rep1 680, fig. 42), but the high popularity of Peter resulted in many sarcophagi on which there was place for his martyrdom alone.²⁷⁹ The martyrdom of both Peter and Paul is most often found on objects coming from Rome: that is not surprising, given the fact that most figurative early Christian art came from Rome anyway. Moreover, the connection of Peter and Paul to Rome was actively promoted by leading members of the Christian community (e.g. Damasus).

2.2.2.2.3 *Peter and the Dog of Simon Magus*

A remarkable example of an apocryphal story of which the source is still known and which is depicted more than once is that of Peter and the dog of Simon Magus. This story has been depicted five times, only on sarcophagi dating from the last quarter of the fourth century (see e.g. fig. 43).²⁸⁰ The story is known from *Acta Petri* 9: standing in front of the house of Marcellus—a follower of the magician Simon—Peter speaks to a dog which he orders to go inside and talk to Simon. The dog answers to Peter and obeys; when he returns, he reports what happened inside and dies at Peter's feet.

The German scholar Stuhlfauth distinguished two different visualisations of the story: the first type shows Peter who speaks to the dog outside the house, urging him to go to Simon the Magician. The second type has the dog speaking to Simon inside the house.²⁸¹ This last scene was also evoked by Commodianus in his *Carmen apologeticum* 625–6: *colloqui fecit / et canem, ut Simoni diceret: 'Clamaris a Petro!'*. Stuhlfauth already noticed this and argued that Commodianus presumably came from Gaul (where the sarcophagi were found) and lived in the fifth century: in Stuhlfauth's view Commodianus knew the story from the depiction on the sarcophagi. However, Commodianus wrote in the third century, as is now generally assumed, and probably came from North-Africa (see 1.1); if any connection exists between the poem and the

279 Had more works of art from the East been preserved, the picture might have been different: Paul seems to have had the same popularity in the East as was reserved for Peter in the West, where nearly all material objects from the early Christian period come from, see e.g. Uggeri (2010) 177–8.

280 Provoost (2011a) 85; Dresken-Weiland (2011a) 151; Koch (2000) 184. Ferreiro (2005) and Ostrowski (1983) do not know Rep 3 304a from Marseille.

281 See Stuhlfauth (1925) 3–9. Ferreiro (2005) 170 refers to the doorkeeper mentioned in Acts and depicted on the sarcophagi from Nîmes and Mantua. However, the doorkeeper is definitely not depicted on the sarcophagus from Cracow (this figure must be Christ, belonging to another lost scene, since he has turned his back to the scene with Peter and the dog).

sarcophagi, it must be the inverse. But it seems questionable to link poetry and art in this case: there is no indication that Commodianus was a particular well-known or popular author in the late fourth century, nor is his reference to Peter and the dog very elaborate. Moreover, without further evidence, the gap between the probable date of his poem (the middle of the third century) and the sarcophagi is too large to presume a relationship.

Since the *Acta Petri* had a considerable popularity and since the theme was introduced in Christian poetry, one might expect more references to the story in poetry. However, apart from the reference in Commodianus, the story was not mentioned in early Christian literature before the sixth century.²⁸² Even on the sarcophagi where the scene occurs, it is depicted on the lid, hence in a secondary position in relation to the front.²⁸³ The fact that the story does appear on sarcophagi might reflect the peculiar taste of some rich aristocrats.²⁸⁴ Sarcophagi were only affordable for a small group: sarcophagi with a personalised decoration were even more expensive than those with a standardised imagery. Given the relatively few number of examples with the scene of Peter and the dog, sarcophagi that bear an image of this story might have belonged to the very rich.²⁸⁵ Otherwise, the deceased who had asked for the sarcophagus might have had a particularly vast knowledge of stories about Peter or a particular preference for this story.²⁸⁶

2.2.2.2.4 *Peter Healing Blind Women*

One of the scenes on the front of a frieze sarcophagus (now in the Vatican Museum) has been interpreted as Peter healing a blind widow: a story from

282 Simon Magus is a rather unpopular figure for Greek and Latin poets: only Gregory of Nazianzus mentions him twice. Poem 1,2,12 430 (see 1.9.4) has a pun on the name Simon. *De uita sua* 1165–7 mentions Simon in a list of people spreading un-Christian ideas.

283 Cf. Stuhlfauth (1925) 8: “Die Sarkophagdeckel gehen überhaupt in gewissem Umfange ihren eigenen Weg.”

284 As a peculiarity, Ostrowski (1983) 309 remarks that all examples of sarcophagi with the story come from outside Rome: this might show a preference for this scene from the side of non-Roman customers (from Gaul). It must be noticed, however, that Provoost (2011c) ascribes the lost sarcophagus from Nîmes (Rep3 418) to a Roman workshop.

285 The quality of the sarcophagi is difficult to determine, since two of them are only preserved in a drawing (Rep3 304 and Rep3 418), and Rep2 151 has been reworked in the Middle Ages (see Dresken-Weiland (1998) 59). Rep2 225 is a fragment. Rep2 152 has survived complete and is of high quality.

286 More or less the same consideration might have made Commodianus refer to the story in his poetry. The possible play with the names Simon Peter and Simon Magus maybe also played a role, as in the case of Gregory of Nazianzus, see 1,2,12 430.

Acta Petri 20.²⁸⁷ The scene is depicted between the multiplication of loaves and fishes and Adam and Eve. A figure lays his right hand on the eyes of a kneeling woman. The two do not look at each other, but clearly belong together. The densely decorated sarcophagus front did not allow many details. It is difficult to confirm the interpretation of the scene as the healing miracle of Peter, but it is clear that the healing man (with a beard) looks similar to other apostles on the sarcophagus and differs from Jesus (clearly recognisable as Christ and without beard), who is performing miracles on the same sarcophagus. The second scene on the sarcophagus shows Christ healing a blind man by laying his fingers on the man's eyes: this is a clear reference to the healing of a blind man. In several instances in the Bible where a blind is healed, Christ lays his hands on his eyes and Peter does the same in the *Acta Petri*.²⁸⁸ Although the hand of the man who might be Peter rests on the head of the kneeling woman, he does not touch her eyes. Imposition of hands can of course have been used as a general symbol for healing, but the craftsman then failed to make a much clearer reference (comparable to that in the second scene of the sarcophagus). Maybe the scene represents the deceased blessed by an apostle.²⁸⁹ This would also be an uncommon scene, but seems to fit the depiction better.

On a sarcophagus from Fermo (Rep2 122), dated around 350–370, the two scenes on the left (fig. 19) show a man with the features of Peter performing miracles that are also difficult to interpret. In both niches, Peter is shown with a man (seemingly depicted as a witness or bystander rather than a principal figure) and a woman (kneeling in the first scene and standing, caught by her hands by Peter, in the second one). In the first scene a woman is added at the back of Peter. Since there is no imposition of hands here, no actual miracle seems to be performed. Stuhlfauth suggested that these images are the preamble of two acts of raising a dead person performed by Peter, mentioned in *Acta Petri* 28 (first scene on the sarcophagus) and *Acta Petri* 25–7 (the second scene).²⁹⁰ Although it is unusual and seems rather ineffective not to depict the miracle itself—since the scenes are undoubtedly meant to honour the apostle Peter—no better interpretation than that by Stuhlfauth has been given.²⁹¹

287 Rep1 12a, see e.g. Provoost (2011a) 106.

288 Matt 9.29; Mark 8.23–5; John 9.6; *Acta Petri* 20–1.

289 Deckers (1996) 146.

290 Stuhlfauth (1925) 28–35. Cf. Koch (2000) 183–4.

291 Cf. Dresken-Weiland (1998) 40: “Bei den ersten beiden Szenen handelt es sich wohl um Petrusszenen; sie lassen sich aber nicht sicher deuten (...).” Cf. the reason of Fabricius (1956) 93 to dismiss Stuhlfauth's interpretation: “(...) damit würde etwas dargestellt sein, was nur Rahmen eines Ereignis wäre (...).” On pp. 92–4 Fabricius—dating the

Sotomayor suggested that the raising of Tabitha was depicted, but the crucial object for interpretation of this scene in the other examples is a bed, which is missing on the Fermo sarcophagus.²⁹² Since we do not have any parallel of the scene, it cannot be decided with certainty how the scene should be interpreted. It might be the visualisation of a miracle performed by Peter according to local or oral history, maybe even a remarkable event from the life of the deceased ascribed to the apostle. If the sarcophagus was only visible for insiders, there would have been no problem of interpretation.

2.2.2.2.5 *Paul and Thecla*

The story of Paul and Thecla is never treated by late antique poets, although Thecla is mentioned in a *carmen* by Gregory of Nazianzus (without any reference to Paul).²⁹³ Depictions of Thecla are equally rare in art before the fifth century; even more rarely is the saint directly connected to Paul.²⁹⁴ A well-known exception is a fragment of a sarcophagus lid (Rep1 832, fig. 44) taken from the wall of the San Valentino basilica (Via Flaminia), showing Paul (identifiable by his name, *Paulus*, written next to him, and his bald forehead) as the helmsman of a boat that bears the name *Thecla* just above the water line. The image is generally interpreted allegorically as a depiction of Paul teaching Thecla (i.e. governing her ship of life).²⁹⁵ There is also an alternative interpretation, which

sarcophagus to the year 500—agrees with Stuhlfauth's rejection of earlier interpretations, but regards the two scenes to refer to miracles performed by Peter in *Acta Petri* 20–1. His analysis is not more compelling than that of Stuhlfauth. Moreover, in his interpretation one scene (the second from the left) is not the depiction of a miracle, but of the event occurring thereafter (Peter asking a cured woman what she saw).

292 Sotomayor (1962a) 158–60: he prefers his own interpretation, but “sin poder llegar, pues, a una conclusion cierta (...) (p. 160).”

293 1,2,2 190–3, see 1.9.3.

294 For Thecla in early Christian art see Nauerth & Warns (1981). On pp. 55–9 they discuss a silver reliquary from around 400 on which Thecla is depicted twice on different sides, flanking a medallion with Peter and Paul around a cross. Provoost in his database only mentions a fragment with the name of Thecla on a boat, see Provoost (2011b) 120 (Rep1 832). Thecla was a popular saint from early times onwards (second century), see LThK 9 s.v. Thekla (Prinzing). Depictions of Thecla often occur in later times, also together with Paul: see e.g. Pillinger (2010) and the paintings in El-Bagawat, for which see recently e.g. Martin (2006). The best overview of depictions by Paul and Thecla is offered by Uggeri (2010) 199–212 (see pp. 207–9 for the sarcophagus depicting Paul's arrest and Thamyris and Thecla: the sarcophagus of Chrysanthus and Daria, Marseille, crypt of Saint Victor: Rep3 297).

295 For the symbolism of ships in early Christian art and thought, see e.g. T1P 228–30 s.v. Nave (Gambassi), p. 229 for the sarcophagus fragment discussed here and a comparison to the

is less plausible: the name *Paulus* on this fragment would refer to a deceased named Paul, who governed a boat that he had called *Thecla* after the Christian saint. On the basis of the similarity in names between the deceased and the apostle, the deceased received the lineaments of Paul. Arguments in favour of this interpretation are the other fishermen on the fragment, who cannot be interpreted otherwise than as décor. Moreover, no story about Paul and Thecla is known in which a ship or the sea plays a part. However, it does not need to be if the ship is interpreted allegorically.²⁹⁶ A parallel for the allegorical interpretation is a lamp in the form of a boat, with Paul as helmsman and Peter on guard on the prow.²⁹⁷ This boat might be the Church, guided by the two main apostles.

The only other possible depiction of Paul and Thecla together on a sarcophagus seems to be a stronger case (Rep3 297, fig. 46): it is a unique scene of a man with a cord around his neck, which is held by another man, while a woman is watching, carved out in the background. She is facing the viewer rather than watching the scene proper. Both men wear a *pallium*. The only reasonable interpretation of this scene identifies the man with the robe as Paul being arrested by Thamyras (the jealous lover of Thecla), and the woman as Thecla. It would then refer to the arrest that is described in *Acta Pauli et Theclae* 15, although Thecla is not mentioned in this passage.²⁹⁸ Thecla listening to a reading Paul is depicted on an ivory piece in the British Museum (dated 420–430).²⁹⁹

2.2.2.2.6 *Apostles other than Peter and Paul*

The apostle Andrew is the only apostle other than the *principes apostolorum* of whom an apocryphal story is used in art and poetry. In the rather obscure

sarcophagus fragment from around the same period showing Christ in a boat with three evangelists (Rep1 134, see 2.1.3.4). See also Chiara De Santis in Utro (2009) 194–5 (no. 65). The name Thecla was not unusual, see Tristan (1996) 404–5 (discussing the fragment).

296 Interpretation by Nauerth & Warns (1981) 82–4. Writing before Nauerth & Warns, Testini (1968) 127–8 had presented a similar argument the other way round: the sarcophagus for a deceased named Thecla would have been reworked later by adding Paul's features to the helmsman and adding his name. Uggeri (2010) 208–11 interprets the fragment in an allegorical way.

297 See e.g. Uggeri (2010) 58–61 (including image). Testini (1968) 127 already noticed the parallel.

298 Koch (2000) 189 considers this scene the only example of a depiction of Paul's arrest. However, the presence of a woman is only explained if the arrest by Thamyras is meant. Moreover, the man holding the robe around Paul's neck does not look like a soldier.

299 Volbach (1952²) no. 117.

hymn 70 (see 1.5.5) on the name of Damasus, the martyrdom of Andrew is mentioned, with an elaborate description of the cross on which he died. From the end of the fourth century, an image is left that seems to depict Andrew on the cross.

On a hexagonal silver pyxis (functioning as a reliquary) from Pola, Peter and Paul are recognisable by their features and their prominent position around Christ.³⁰⁰ Next to Peter another apostle is depicted, who holds a cross. Since Peter is already depicted, this must be Andrew, the other apostle who died on a cross.³⁰¹ Moreover, he was the brother of Peter, which accounts for his position next to the most famous apostle. Two other apostles are depicted on the other sides of the pyxis, without specific attributes.

One other story appears in art only. On a Spanish sarcophagus in Madrid, the apostles are depicted with their names carved above their heads.³⁰² Some names remain, which makes it possible to explain a scene at the right end of the frieze. The second apostle from the right, Matthew, hands a *capsa* to the apostle on his left, who is Bartholomew according to the inscription. This scene seems to reflect the legend of Bartholomew leaving the Gospel of Matthew in India.³⁰³ The depiction of the transmission of the *capsa* was an effective way to translate this idea in art and to emphasise the learnedness of the apostle by depicting him in a philosophical setting with the other apostles and Christ. It is unclear why someone in Spain would refer to this story of a rather unknown apostle.

In poetry, Bartholomew's mission to India might have been referred to by Claudian, but his poem is obscure (see 1.7.2). In any case it is highly unlikely that a tiny late fourth-century poem of the court-poet Claudian had any influence on Christian art (or vice versa).

2.2.2.3 Symbolical and other Non-Narrative Scenes

Several images of the apostles are difficult to classify along the lines of the two categories canonical/non-canonical. Although these categories cover

300 Kalinowski (2011) 137–8, *Tafel* 111. Cf. Elsner (2013).

301 It is Kalinowski's apostle D (see Kalinowski (2011) *Tafel* 111b). She does not mention Andrew (nor does Buschhausen (1971) 249–51 (no. B20), but describes him (p. 138) as "ein Apostel mit einem Taukreuz (...)." The identification was already made by Kollwitz (1941) 159.

302 For a description, see Schlunk & Hauschild (1978) 129.

303 Cf. 1.11.8. See Eusebius *h.e.* 5.10.3 and Jerome *vir. ill.* 36 for the story. Johnson (2008) 25 argues that Eusebius refers to Jemen, not to India, *pace* Dihle (1998) 308. Cf. recent discussion in Burnet (2014) 455–65, who concludes: "l'hypothèse d'une mission de Barthélemy en Inde n'est pas totalement absurde" (p. 464).

all narrative scenes, which are the focus of this research, some other scenes cannot remain unnoticed, because of their frequency in early Christian art. Moreover, the outer appearance of the apostles deserves some attention.

2.2.2.3.1 Dominus legem dat

The *Dominus legem dat* scene (see e.g. fig. 42 and 47) only occurs from the second half of the fourth century onwards. The scene has been much discussed in modern scholarship, partly because there is no clear literary source that sheds light on its meaning.³⁰⁴ There is no direct poetical reference to the image either.

In scholarship, the traditional name of the *Dominus legem dat* is *Traditio legis*, but the idea that Christ is handing over a scroll to Peter has now generally been abandoned. The image shows Christ flanked by Peter (on his left) and Paul (on his right). Peter is often bearing a cross, Paul a scroll. Christ is sometimes seated on a throne but much more often he is standing between Peter and Paul on the rock or hill of paradise (from which streams of water might flow).³⁰⁵ He holds an opened scroll with the words *Dominus legem dat*, which Peter hastens to catch.³⁰⁶ Sheep sometimes represent the cities of Jerusalem (*ecclesia ex circumcissione*) and Bethlehem (*ecclesia ex gentibus*). A palm tree and a phoenix may be represented too. Both the words *legem dare* and the depiction of the opened scroll suggest that Christ is proclaiming his new law rather than handing it over to Peter, although the scene also recalls the

304 For an overview of the discussion concerning the *Dominus legem dat* scene see TIP 288–93 s.v. *Traditio legis et clavium* (Spera); more concise LCI 347–51 s.v. *Traditio legis* (Schuhmacher), but with a rather unusual interpretation. Articles dedicated to the scene include Hvalvik (2006), Bøgh Rasmussen (2001) and Berger (1973). In larger monographs that discuss early Christian art, the scene is e.g. discussed in Uggeri (2010) 136–83 and Koch (2000) 191–3, with particular attention to the provenance of the sarcophagi. See also Pietri (1976) 1413–40.

305 Uggeri (2010) distinguishes three types of the *Dominus legem dat* scene, of which the first type shows most details (e.g. a phoenix is frequently depicted, see pp. 149–64), the second has Christ on a throne (from Roman provenance in the sixties of the fourth century only, see pp. 166–77) and the third shows the scroll being caught by Paul, often without depiction of Peter (pp. 177–83). In the San Giovanni in Fonte, Christ is depicted on a globe (fig. 47), see Hvalvik (2006) 424–6.

306 Mainly for this reason *Dominus legem dat* is a better indication of the scene than *traditio legis*, as Dresken-Weiland (2011a) 145 rightly remarks. It should be noted that the phrase *Dominus legem dat* was not exclusively used for the scene described here: a lamp made of bronze shaped as Peter and Paul on a boat has the same phrase, see e.g. Uggeri (2010) 58–61 (including image), Testini (1968) 127 and Rapisarda (1964), image after p. 628; Cf. 2.2.2.3.4 below.

handing over of the Ten Commandments to Moses, who was associated with the apostle Peter (for which see 2.2.2.1.1).³⁰⁷

The image—originating from Rome—emphasises the special status of Peter and Paul, but Christ is the central figure. For most viewers of the scene, one might suspect, it was a depiction of the proclamation of the message of a triumphant Christ, with Peter and Paul as his most important witnesses and representatives after the Ascension. However, for the makers of the scene and for those viewers who had a firm theological background, it seems to be linked to the Great Commission. In early Christian exegesis, the texts of Isaiah 2.3 and Micah 4.2 were explained as references to Christ's new law, which was spread into the world by his apostles. Peter and Paul were depicted as the most important representatives of the entire group of the apostles.³⁰⁸

Some examples of a similar scene exist that have Paul receiving the scroll. The fact that most of them stem from the imperial city of Ravenna might indicate that Paul's primary position was established there by means of competition with Rome, even more so since Ravennatic sarcophagi were influenced by Constantinopolitan craftsmen. On these sarcophagi, the scene seems to have developed in a real *traditio*, since the scroll is no longer opened (Rep2 381; 382a).³⁰⁹ Clearly, the honorary presence of Peter and Paul at Christ's presenting of the law is close to a real handing over of it. However, in meaning the ravennatic *traditio legis* is closer to the *traditio clavium* than to the *Dominus legem dat*.³¹⁰

The depiction of Christ enthroned (for some Roman examples see above), the absence of paradisiacal elements such as the palm trees and the absence of Peter on some of these sarcophagi (Rep2 381; 382a) are the most remarkable visual changes in comparison with *Dominus legem dat* scenes from Rome.

The original *Dominus legem dat* scene is mainly used on sarcophagi, but also in the *arti minori*, on reliquaries, on monumental mosaics and on one or

307 This scene normally shows a hand in the sky, handing the commandments over to Moses. It is e.g. depicted at the opposite side of a *Dominus legem dat* on a reliquary from Salonicco, see Uggeri (2010) 163.

308 Hvalvik (2006). He rejects the interpretation of the *Dominus legem dat* as promotion of Peter's primacy. Hvalvik does not cite Katzenellenbogen (1947), who in his discussion of the sarcophagus of Stilicho highlights the importance of the same (and other prophetic) texts for this scene.

309 See also Hvalvik (2006) 415, who refers to *Repertorium* 3, but must mean the second volume.

310 Already noted by Schumacher (1959).

two catacomb paintings.³¹¹ On a unique glass bowl from Obernburg Paul also catches the open scroll (Petrus has already caught another, which is closed). This remarkable iconography maybe supposes a Ravennatic rather than a Roman origin of the glass.³¹² This iconography is also found on a bronze fragment in Berlin and on a plate from Ostia.³¹³ These scattered examples make it difficult to find a coherent interpretation for all occurrences of the scene, which there need not be anyway.

The origin of the *Dominus legem dat* scene is unknown, but a first occurrence as apse mosaic in the old basilica of Saint Peter in Rome (where a depiction of the two apostles who had died in the city would not have been out of place) seems not improbable: there is a drawing of the apse with the *Dominus legem dat* scene by Giacomo Grimaldi from 1619.³¹⁴ Although it shows a later reworking of the mosaic, this refashioning might have been a copy of the image already at hand. Moreover, the Pola casket (around 400) shows the scene

311 Provoost (2011a) 61 has 34 occurrences of the scene on sarcophagi only; Pietri (1976) 1419, however, mentions a fresco in the catacomb of Priscilla (also mentioned by Uggeri (2010) 143) and a possible fresco in the Callixtus catacomb (only the images of Christ and Paul remain). Testini (1968) 120 refers to a painting in the catacombs *ad Decimum* (photo in Uggeri (2010) 142) as the only painted example of the scene. For the *Dominus legem dat* on reliquaries see Kalinowski (2011) 138–40. An example on glass has also been found, see Buschhausen (1971) 209 (B20). The *Dominus legem dat* scene is the only non-canonical apostle scene on remaining graffiti, see Dresken-Weiland & Weiland (2005) 31; 35–6. Koch (2000) 343 mentions one example on the copestone of a *loculus* grave which has the *Dominus legem dat* (other depictions of apostles on this kind of objects are a possible water miracle by Peter and portraits of Peter and Paul). For the *Dominus legem dat* on several forms of art other than sarcophagi, see Uggeri (2010) 138–48.

312 Deckers (1998), on p. 11 he suggests Rome as place of origin of the bowl. For the Ravennatic sarcophagi see Uggeri (2010) 177–83; Kollwitz (1941) 153–77 for Constantinopolitan influence. According to Pietri (1976) 1424–5 and Kollwitz (1941) 156 these sarcophagi were not meant to question the primary rank of Peter among the apostles. Kollwitz interprets the scene in the traditional way as the handing over of a scroll and compares it to the appointment of officials in the late Roman Empire. He adds: “Wenn man in Konstantinopel gerade Paulus das Gesetz empfangen läßt und diese Szene dann immer wiederholt, so spricht daraus eine ganz besondere Vertrautheit mit seiner Person.” See Kollwitz (1941) 157–8 (quotation from p. 158).

313 Dresken-Weiland (1991) 182–4.

314 Kollwitz (1936) 63 considers the fact that Peter is “receiving” the scroll an additional argument in favour of original use in San Pietro and also refers to a *traditio legis* with John in the Chiesa di San Giovanni Evangelista in Ravenna, from the fifth century. However, the scene is most often used outside churches devoted to Peter and the evidence seems not to point to general use of *traditio legis* images to indicate titular saints.

on one side and the characteristic *confessio* of the basilica of Saint Peter on another.³¹⁵ The earliest remaining example of a *Dominus legem dat* (fig. 48) is found in the Santa Costanza (337–354) in Rome, but unfortunately it is not sure what it looked like before restoration: the present text on the scroll is *Dominus pacem dat*.³¹⁶ Maybe the fact that the scene in the remaining evidence first appeared on a mosaic is an additional support for the idea that it was originally developed for monumental art. In the Santa Costanza the mosaic is attached to a niche, a position similar in form to the shape of the apse mosaic in old San Pietro.

2.2.2.3.2 *Distinguishing the Apostles: The Case of Peter and Paul*

In the *Dominus legem dat* scene, the features of Peter and Paul are clearly distinguished for the first time: there is no difference in dress.³¹⁷ Peter has a wealth of curled, white or grey, hair and a rounded beard, Paul has a bald forehead and a pointed dark beard. Except for the facial features, some further aspects of the apostles' appearance made it possible to refer to Peter and Paul: Peter is the only apostle bearing a cross before the fifth century, apart from one depiction of Andrew (see 2.2.2.2.6). Moreover, if two apostles are depicted alone with Christ or in front of the group of twelve apostles, it can be reasonably argued—even if their faces seem to be depicted indifferently from those of the other apostles—that they represent Peter and Paul, given their outstanding position in early Christian theology in general. The fact that they are often depicted

315 Franke (1972) 270. See especially Bøgh Rasmussen (2001) 38–45, concluding (p. 45): “Zusammenfassend kann man konkludieren, daß es die Situation im Hinblick auf Quellen und Material ganz einfach nicht erlaubt, anderes anzunehmen, als daß es möglich und vielleicht nicht unwahrscheinlich ist, daß es in der Peterskirche in Rom um 400 in der Apsis eine *Traditio legis*-Darstellung gab.” Similarly: Elsner (2013) 187, cf. also p. 188. Elsner offers an extensive analysis of the casket in the light of pagan iconographical traditions of opened and closed doors. This motif plays an important role on the casket too. Elsner interprets the *Dominus legem dat* as a depiction of the fulfillment of the promises of the rest of the casket's imagery (p. 220). Bisconti (2009b) interprets the casket as a reflection of the Roman architectural landscape of the late fourth century. The casket is neither mentioned by Brenk (2011) 115 nor by Pietri (1976) 1416–7.

316 See e.g. Uggeri (2010) 143–6; for an alternative interpretation (considering the reading *pacem* authentic) see Ciancio (2002), pp. 1857–60 in particular. Ciancio enumerates some other interpretations at p. 1852 (note 20). Most extensively on the (decoration of) the Santa Costanza Rasch & Arbeiter (2007), “Teil 2: Die Mosaiken”.

317 Huskinson (1982) 3–4. Cf. Ficker (1887) 27–48 for sources on the appearance of the apostles. Carr (1978) discusses the development of the depiction of Peter in mediaeval times. In the fifth century, Peter was sometimes depicted on a throne see id. 24 (figs. 31–2).

together most clearly expresses the *concordia apostolorum* that has become the usual designation of the apostles' peculiar position.³¹⁸ Peter's special status as the apostle to whom the Church was entrusted by Christ himself is emphasised by his position at the left of Christ (i.e. at the right for the viewer); this position indicated prominence in antique art and also had positive Biblical connotations.³¹⁹ These aspects notwithstanding, the creation of different features for both apostles was a major step in the development of the cult of the saints. By contrast, references to the apostles' outer appearance are extremely rare and rather vague in poetry (see 1.13.19).

2.2.2.3.3 *Peter and Paul on Gold Glasses*

Even apart from the famous *Dominus legem dat*, sarcophagi showing both Peter's and Paul's martyrdom, Peter and Paul leading the group of apostles (often with Christ in the middle, cf. the first mosaics in the Santa Pudenziana basilica in Rome, fig. 8, and in the Sant'Aquilino chapel in Milan, fig. 9) and some rare other scenes (like the encounter of Peter and Paul, see 2.2.2.2.1), many other images also show the two apostles together.³²⁰

This is especially the case on gold glasses, where Peter and Paul are often depicted without Christ; it is clear that the emphasis is on the two apostles.³²¹ Although the two men met only once according to the Bible—which resulted in a conflict about respect for the Jewish religious laws and contact with heathens—they were associated from early times onwards. Many popular legends told how they met in Rome and both died there (whether on the same day or in the same year, or not). Moreover, in the Bible they were already presented as more important than the other apostles. It is not surprising, therefore, that many images of the two apostles appeared, representing the *concordia apostolorum* in different forms.³²²

The Old Testament seems to have offered more inspiration to the producers of gold glasses than the New Testament. A majority of the gold glasses shows bust or portraits of Biblical figures and saints: narrative scenes are less often depicted. Images of Peter and Paul are regularly used, frequently with well-known Christian symbols such as the Christogram, scrolls, an *orans*, or a

318 The landmark studies are Huskinson (1982), Pietri (1976) 1537–1626 and id. (1961). See now also Lønstrup (2010) 73–138.

319 See e.g. Janssens (2011), pp. 173–6 in particular.

320 A good overview with many images is provided by Uggeri (2010) 49–102.

321 Pietri (1961) 278.

322 Augustine criticised images of Peter, Paul and Christ (especially the *Dominus legem dat*) since they never met on earth, see *cons. eu.* 1,14–6, referred to by Uggeri (2010) 166.

martyr's crown. Christ is sometimes depicted in the middle of them (see e.g. Morey 70).³²³ The two apostles are also shown as *magistri*, seated on a stool: Peter is handing over a scroll to Paul (Morey 69).³²⁴ A famous example (Morey 106, fig. 50) shows the busts of four men; the captions assure that they are Peter and Paul, a man with the inscription *pastor* and Damasus. This gold glass clearly meant to serve the establishment of Damasus' name as a patron of Roman saints.³²⁵ Other examples also show Peter and Paul—or one of them—with saints: whereas the apostles are recognisable by their features and/or their names written next to them, the other saints can remain anonymous.³²⁶ Although the two apostles are sometimes shown with their specific features (see 2.2.2.3.2), in other instances they are distinguished by their name only.

One gold glass (Morey 78) has a *Dominus legem dat* scene. The gold glass depiction does not show any deviants from the scene as it is known from e.g. the Santa Costanza, which has led to the plausible suggestion that the gold glass was produced after an apse mosaic, maybe that from the old basilica of Saint Peter.³²⁷ More complex scenes might have been considered less appropriate for objects used in everyday life: a more simple reference to Christianity sufficed.³²⁸ Moreover, gold glasses offered only limited space for figurative decoration, at least on the bottoms of the glasses, which are the only decorated parts that remain.

The images on *scrinia* and reliquaries have similar features. The apostles are often depicted in busts or portraits (nearly always Peter, Paul and anonymous apostles), allegorically as lambs and also in the *Dominus legem dat* scene. Apart from a cross carried by Peter in the *Dominus legem dat*, no reference is made to the martyrdom of the apostles (or other saints), contrary to what one would

323 I follow general practice by using Morey (1959), the catalogue of the gold glass collection of the Vatican Library, to refer to images of gold glasses.

324 See e.g. Pietri (1961) 280.

325 Who the figure indicated by the word *pastor* is, is not clear. His bust is slightly larger than the others: this might support an interpretation as Christ. For a discussion of different depictions of Peter and Paul (on this glass without beards) on gold glasses, see Pietri (1961) 278–93.

326 Example in Utro (2009) 198–9, cat. no. 69 with Paul and four martyrs. This piece testifies to the fact that Paul was also venerated on his own, without Peter. Images of Peter and/or Paul with other saints are also found in the catacombs of Naples, which do not offer narrative scenes with the apostles for our period: see Achelis (1935–6) Tafel 34, 39–43.

327 Nüsse (2008) 238.

328 Cf. Dresken-Weiland (201b) 78.

expect to find on reliquaries.³²⁹ The cross is a *crux gemmata*, which is a sign of victory rather than a reference to an instrument of torture.³³⁰

Due to the lack of narrative scenes on gold glasses and the lack of descriptions of the outer appearance of the apostles in poetry, no link can be established between these two media. Only the emphasis on the *principes apostolorum* once again confirms the strength of their presence in the fourth century.

2.2.2.3.4 Other Non-Narrative Apostle Scenes

The paintings of the catacombs reflect little interest in the apostles in the first phase of early Christian art: depictions of the twelve together are the only depictions of apostles that are frequently found.³³¹ They are dressed like ancient philosophers, in a tunica, with *pallium* and sandals.³³² They often have a beard. Sometimes *capsellae* with scrolls are added to depictions of the apostles: these objects might emphasise their erudition (cf. the philosopher's dress) and their function as witnesses of the Holy Writ and transmitters of the word of Christ, both orally and in written form (two gospels and many letters were supposed to be written by the apostles).³³³ A remarkable example of a sarcophagus emphasising the apostles' connection to writing is that of the lid of the Concordius sarcophagus (Rep3 65): the lid in a way repeats the frieze of this sarcophagus where the apostles are also depicted with scrolls in their hands (see fig. 6).

Especially on sarcophagi (where the apostles are depicted in the same way as in the catacombs), the twelve sometimes make acclamations to Christ (e.g. Paul in the *Dominus legem dat* scene, see below).³³⁴ These depictions primarily aim at exalting Christ rather than the apostles. Occasionally, Christ is replaced

329 See Buschhausen (1971). In the first category of his catalogue ("A. Metallschreine") I count 23 examples of cases with Christian figurative images, on seven of which images of the apostles appear (A55; 60; 61; 64; 66; 71; 75). In the second part ("B. Die figürlichen Reliquiare"), I found 14 Christian examples from (probably) before 400, of which eight contained images of apostles. Due to their deteriorated state, interpretation of some scenes is difficult.

330 Pietri (1976) 1569–71. Cf. TIC 158–60 s.v. Croce (crocifissione) (Felle).

331 15 times, see Zimmermann (2007) 157.

332 Matt 10.9–10 (cf. Luke 10.4) forbade the apostles to wear sandals: "Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts, no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep." However, the Gospel of Mark allowed it explicitly (Mark 6.9). Cf. Gregory of Nazianzus II,1,12 199–205 (p. 174).

333 These *capsellae* also appear on sarcophagi, see e.g. Rep1 55.

334 Cf. Koch (2000) 193: *Aurum coronarium*.

by a cross.³³⁵ On other images (sarcophagi and catacomb paintings), two apostles flank a deceased. Although they could be Peter and Paul, they are not always recognisable as such.³³⁶

Although these images were not directly based on the Bible, they are clearly derived from general ideas taken from that collection of texts. The depiction of the apostles as wise and learned men is in poetry reflected by the respectful treatment of them, even if they are not directly compared to philosophers (e.g. through intertextual references).³³⁷ For example, Paul's citation of the ancient philosopher Epimenides in his speech on the Areopagus (Acts 17.28) was never used in poetry.

The above mentioned lamp with Peter and Paul (2.2.2.2.5) testifies to the presence of apostle images on utensils, of which only little evidence is left.³³⁸ The lamp could have been meant for private use, but liturgical use in a house chapel has also been suggested.³³⁹ A comb from Salona provides another example.³⁴⁰ *Ampullae* with portraits of Peter and Paul have also been found.³⁴¹ Similarly, the apostles were not only depicted on mosaics and paintings in church, but also on architectural elements such as the pilaster of a liturgical enclosure, which is now in the Vatican Museum (fig. 45).

2.3 Concluding Remarks

Stories in the Biblical canon in which the apostles play an important role are rather scarce. In the gospels they appear as servants or disciples of Christ, but in most cases they do not act on their own. Notable exceptions are Peter and

335 Examples of sarcophagi in Koch (2000) 194–5.

336 Uggeri (2010) 73–9. Examples of sarcophagi in Koch (2000) 195–6.

337 An example of an explicit comparison between the apostles (in this case Peter and Paul) and philosophers is found in a hypogaeum of the Via Dino Compagni, where an image of Christ teaching Peter and Paul is depicted opposite of an image of Socrates and his pupils, see De Bruyne (1969) 79–81 (= F254). Cf. Uggeri (2010) 103–5.

338 See especially Testini (1969) with the lamp mentioned in note 1377. A small statue of Peter with a cross may also have been part of a oil lamp, but its authenticity is doubted, see Sena Chiesa (2012) cat. no. 75 (description by Marano). See also Mazzei (2010) 203 (fig. 25) for a remarkable lamp with the scene of Peter's water miracle. Cf. also 2.2.2.3.1.

339 See Brenk (2003) 119–21, who suggests use in the house chapel (p. 121). It is not clear by whom the lamp was given to the Valerius Severus mentioned in the inscription, see McLynn (2012) 316.

340 Depicted in Marin, Kirigin et al. (2003) 39. Cf. also the crater mentioned in 2.1.2 (fig. 7).

341 See Utro (2009) 200–2, cat. no. 71–2.

Judas, although the latter is only highlighted as a character in the story of the Passion. In the other works of the New Testament, especially in the book of Acts, the apostles have a more independent role. However, the Acts of the apostles actually present stories from the life of Peter and Paul. The letters included in the New Testament contain important information about the life of the apostle Paul in particular. The few stories from the lives of the apostles that receive more than occasional attention in both art and poetry reflect the main stories from the Biblical account.

First of all, the disciples are depicted and described frequently as followers of Christ. In art, they appear in various categories of objects: if scenes from the New Testament are depicted, the apostles are included in most cases. Even if they do not play a role in the Biblical account, they are depicted nevertheless: their function as witnesses and heralds of Christ's miracles is more important than an exact translation of the Biblical text into an image. This is due to the symbolical meaning of most early Christian imagery, which exists alongside the historical narrative that is inextricably linked to the image. The number of the apostles differs and is in most cases determined by the type of composition and the space available rather than the description of the story in the Bible.

Comparable to the apostles are the "apostelartige Hintergrundgestalten", who seem to meet a kind of *horror vacui* on many sarcophagi. Instead of filling the background of (mostly) miracle scenes with details about the situation, place or time in which the miracle was supposed to have happened, witnesses carved in low relief were included. This way of representing miracle scenes is telling about the purpose of them: they were depicted in the hope that God would be likewise merciful to the deceased. Apart from the freedom in the depiction of the number of apostles, late antique craftsmen did hardly go any further beyond the Biblical account. That account is lacunose in providing information about the circumstances of the events described. It is reasonable to assume that those who commissioned works of art chose the scenes that were depicted, without specifying all details with which these scenes were executed. Understandably, those who executed these orders—who had a lower social position and were vulnerable to criticism—tried to avoid any offensive element in their work. They suppressed any personal ideas about the presentation of the scenes. Apostle-like figures were a safe choice.

A bit more artistic licence is visible in the representation of Peter and Paul, who are recognisable among the other apostles from the second half of the fourth century onwards. But the origin of the way their features were depicted lies with the depiction of ancient philosophers and was thus attuned to the philosophical appearance that was given to the apostles from the beginning.

In poetry, similar tendencies can be found. Juvencus, for example, who mentioned the apostles more often than most of his colleagues, since he versified the whole gospel, is known for his reservations about providing details of the setting of Biblical stories. He is the only poet to consistently emphasise the disciples' following of Christ. For other poets after him, especially at the end of the fourth century, individual acts of saints (including the apostles, and especially Peter and Paul) or doctrinal matters are most important. However, this seems rather due to the development of the genre: after Juvencus and the extraordinary contribution by Proba in cento-form, no large-scale Biblical epic was written in the fourth century.

Comparable to the corpus of poetical texts, the group of the apostles in art is a group of anonymous disciples: the individuals who form these groups 'fade into' the group: examples of apostles with their names added to distinguish them among each other are rare, and date from the end of the fourth century. Apart from Peter and Paul, the lack of information about the disciples' individuality in the Bible is faithfully reflected in the poetic and visual representation of the apostles. The scarce Biblical references to acts of or other information about the individual apostles, barely find any resonance: Judas grumbling about the anointment of a woman in Bethany (John 12.4–6), John's presence at the cross (John 19.26: maybe absent from art because of the reluctance to depict the crucifixion, but cf. e.g. Rep2 102 with two sleeping soldiers next to the cross), Matthias' election as an apostle (Acts 1.15–26), Matthew's profession (Matt 10.3, mentioned by Juvencus and Gregory of Nazianzus), Philip's role in the "vocation" of Nathanael (John 1.43–6, mentioned by Juvencus) and his role as a mediator between some curious people and Christ (John 12.21–2) are never depicted and rarely mentioned in poetry. The sole presence of Peter, James and John at the miracle of the raising of Jairus' daughter, the Transfiguration and the garden of Gethsemane explicitly mentioned in the Bible, is equally poorly reflected in art and poetry.

Apart from Peter and Paul, only Judas has been depicted and described in poetry more than a few times (especially in epics and in didactic texts). With the exception of a possible bizarre depiction with a Janus head on the Servanne sarcophagus (Rep3 42, fig. 27), he is not clearly distinguished from the other apostles in art. Judas is presented because of his role in the life of Christ: comparable to the representation of the other apostles, that of Judas also depends on that of his master. The Lipsanoteca from Brescia is a possible exception, but this ivory casket offers an otherwise unusually rich iconography.

In the gospels, the group of the twelve apostles does play a more important role in some passages, e.g. in the story of the storm at sea (Matt 8.23–7), the Last Supper, or the events in the Gethsemane: nevertheless, these stories are

not often reflected in poetry or art. Most notably, any image of the descent of the Holy Spirit is missing and in poetry it is referred to only once, by Paulinus. This absence of Whitsun reflects its liturgical status in the fourth century, when its celebration was not yet widespread. The same can be said about the Ascension, which is depicted a few times in art, but in poetry only occurs in Proba's cento. Christmas, Epiphany and Easter were widely celebrated, and references to the stories behind these feasts are abundant in art and poetry alike. Consequently, the most important Christian feasts were those that commemorated events in which the apostles had not played any role according to the Bible (Christmas, Epiphany) or only a minor one (mainly Peter, Judas and John in the story of the Passion and Resurrection commemorated with Easter).

Apart from the lack of stories about the 'minor' apostles, even several events from the lives of Peter and Paul described in the book of Acts are absent from both art and poetry, e.g. Peter and Simon Magus (Acts 8.9–24) or nearly all of Paul's journeys (Acts 13–28, Paul's letters). The absence of the story of Peter raising Aeneas (Acts 9.33–4) is also surprising, given the possible allusions to the other, much more famous, Aeneas.³⁴² The lack of depictions of Paul's conversion in particular is remarkable, since the conversion of an intellectual at first sight seems an appropriate image for the period of late antiquity. However, most Christian art probably never reached non-Christians. Although the scene could also have been used in the self-representation of converted aristocrats, it might have been considered too mystical. Maybe conversion was also less important a topic at the end of the fourth century, since more and more Christians were already born in a Christian family. Furthermore, Paul was no match for Peter in popularity, in Christian art in particular.³⁴³ Paul was more important as a Christian thinker and intellectual³⁴⁴—his writings are often cited in poetry—and therefore also less suitable a figure to exalt in narrative images, especially since the group of apostles was already presented as a gathering of wise men.

Nevertheless, the pair of Peter and Paul had an important place in early Christian imagery. They are the only apostles who are clearly distinguished from the other disciples until the fifth century. The corpus of non-canonical apostle stories in art and poetry also testifies to this fact. In art, nearly all non-canonical images that exist, show Peter and Paul (there are only two exceptions). In poetry there is hardly more variety: the two references to other

342 Nevertheless, Kessler (1979) 109 emphasises the rich presence of Acts in early Christian art.

343 Cf. Dassmann (1982), about his investigation to the veneration of Paul in early Christianity: "(...) das Suchen war mühsam, die Ergebnisse sind bescheiden."

344 Cf. e.g. Lohse (1979).

apostles by Claudian are vague and Paulinus only lists some of the missionary regions of the apostles. Only Ambrose and the author of the pseudo-Damasian hymn 70 refer directly to non-canonical narratives, in poems about John and Andrew respectively.

The predominance of the two *principes apostolorum* was probably influenced by the Roman provenance of most of the works of art that we still possess. However, the sources we have from elsewhere do not suggest that local apostolic traditions were already very strong in the third and fourth century.³⁴⁵ The huge popularity of Paul and especially Peter among the Roman elite is unsurprising: Rome was the city of their martyrdom and the basilica for Peter was the largest church of Rome: people wanted to connect themselves and their families with this apostle.³⁴⁶

Peter was venerated most actively. He was probably also most appealing to ordinary Christians: a fact that was expressed in the scene with the cock in particular. Peter is the Biblical character depicted most often in art, after Jesus Christ. But even in his case, events from his life in which Christ was involved were deemed most important. This is also a noteworthy difference with pagan sarcophagi, on which heroes and gods could be depicted as examples of good or bad behaviour:³⁴⁷ a similar idea lies behind many depictions of Peter, but it is always felt that another character, Christ, is actually more important.

In the two canonical stories of Peter that are most often referred to, both in art and poetry, the interaction with Christ is essential: in the story of the denial (in art extended into the story of Peter's assignment as the leader of the Church) and in that of the *traditio clavium* (to be taken together with the idea of Peter as rock of the Church, frequently evoked in Christian poetry). Stories from Peter's life in which Christ does not play a direct role, do not often occur and if so only later in the fourth century: the story of Ananias and Sapphira, the miracle at the *Porta speciosa*, the vision in Joppa, the raising of Tabitha and the escape from prison. The only poets who mention these stories are Prudentius and Paulinus.

345 If we would have more visual material from the East the picture might have been different. Cf. Bovini (1954) 255 on the similarities between sarcophagi from Spain, Gaul and Italy.

346 Dresken-Weiland (2011a) 139. The basilica of Paul would only equal that of Peter from the end of the fourth century onwards, i.e. after the production of most of the artefacts in our corpus.

347 Cf. Turcan (1999) 23–58; Zanker (2000) 209–10. Cf. Bowes (2011) 190 about Roman houses: "Mythological narrative, in short, was tailored to think with. There is no Christian parallel for this kind of thinking that we can see either in the permanent domestic images or the numerous candidates among portable objects."

Apocryphal literature shows more interest in the individual lives of the apostles than canonical writings. This is reflected by the apocryphal stories about Peter that are used in art and poetry, since the role of Christ is less pertinent in these than in their canonical counterparts. Peter's arrest was a popular story in art. However, rather than looking for the same story in early Christian poetry, it seems appropriate to connect the story of Peter's martyrdom with it. Whereas the depiction of Peter's martyrdom in art was felt to be too cruel and humiliating, it was evoked by the depictions of his arrest, sometimes more explicitly by depicting the cross on Peter's shoulder (cf. also the *Dominus legem dat*). Although the story of Peter and Paul's martyrdom in Rome in itself is not attested in the canon, it was accepted at an early stage and played an important part in the politics of the bishop of Rome, especially from the second half of the fourth century onwards. Therefore, although of apocryphal nature, the story was not embarrassing at all for either poets, commissioners, craftsmen or the audience.

The scene of Peter healing the blind women is so scarcely attested in art that it is probably due to the influence of personal preference of an aristocrat that it exists. The same is true for some stories mentioned only once in poetry: the references to the missionary work of several lesser known apostles, the martyrdom of Andrew, the events from the life of John and the conversation of Paul and the lion. Some other remarks might rather refer to general characteristics of the apostles than to existing traditions, especially Paul starving and freezing and Peter eating lupines.

A peculiar case is the story about Peter and the dog of Simon Magus: it is the one apocryphal story that is found in poetry and art alike (apart from the martyrdom of Peter and Paul). Nevertheless, Commodianus is the only poet to refer to it. Our restricted knowledge of the circumstances of his poetic production hampers further insights in the reason behind his reference to the story. It is not known for certain whether Commodianus was often read, but the lack of references to his work suggests that he was not a popular author. Assuming that the existence of this story in early Christian poetry contributed to its appearance in art would therefore stretch the evidence too far.

A comparison of the use of non-canonical sources (both apocryphal and other) about the apostles in early Christian art and poetry has revealed that traces of mutual influence of art and poetry are hard to find. The only story appearing frequently in both media (the martyrdom of Peter and Paul) was popular to such a degree that its presence primarily reflects early Christian thought and not a direct connection between art and poetry. Since only few different non-canonical stories are used, this sparing use is the main similarity between the two media regarding the representation of the apostles.

Other similarities include the limited interest in the outer appearance of the apostles and the popularity of Peter and, less significantly, of Paul (often together with Peter) and the twelve apostles as a group.³⁴⁸

The non-canonical stories used in art and poetry differ considerably. Differences might be explained by the circumstances of production and consumption of art and poetry. Although both art and poetry were ordered by aristocrats, different groups of aristocrats were interested in the different media. Most Christian poetry from the fourth century was primarily used in a private context. The hymns of Ambrose (and maybe Hilary) form an exception. Paulinus used his poetry for the veneration of Felix, but in several ways acted more as traditional Roman landowner than as a man of the Church.

It is hardly coincidental that all poets in the fourth century remained quite strictly within the boundaries of the Church (possibly others did not and their poetry has not survived). Especially the poets operating in the first half of the fourth century were probably too busy exploring the very idea of Christian poetry in the first place to take unofficial traditions into account. Moreover, poetry was considered a high medium of expression and might have been deemed too elevate to be used for stories circulating outside official circuits. But also in the second half of the century, only very few non-canonical stories were used. Maybe the apocryphal stories were not as accepted as generally has been thought: despite opinions to the contrary, we might partly have to return to the idea that apocryphal stories reflect the so-called *Volksfrömmigkeit* more than the beliefs or interests of the elite.³⁴⁹ Even though apocryphal stories also circulated among the elite (which is confirmed by references in the Church Fathers) they were not considered suitable for poetical or visual reproduction. For most poets, to pay more attention to the non-canonical traditions would have been possible, but the stories from the Bible were sufficient for them. Moreover, for the themes of *concordia apostolorum* and *concordia duodecim* on which they focused, apocryphal sources were not needed.

348 Testini (1968) 105–7 suggested that defining the apostles' outer appearance was thought to stimulate idolatry and was therefore forbidden in art, but this seems to exaggerate the extension and intensity of the iconoclastic policy of the Church.

349 About the difference in preferences between the elite and other Christians, see Bovon (1981) 157 (speaking specifically about the Acts of the Apostles): "Paradoxalement, en canonisant ce livre, on risquait de cesser le raconteur et par là de le connaître. Il devenait l'affaire du clergé et sa lecture, de privée, devenait liturgique." It has been argued that the apocryphal stories were written by semi-literates: people not belonging to the upper class (the court and the high clergy), but to a group of educated people next to them, see Gounelle (2014).

The few apocryphal stories that appear in early Christian art are mainly carved out on sarcophagi: this might be explained by the private use of these objects. Some of them stood in open air or in churches, but many others stood in private chapels or were buried beneath the ground. Remarkable examples such as the sarcophagus with the Dioscuri and the Peter reading scenes suggest that rich aristocrats ordering a sarcophagus could leave the trodden paths of early Christian imagery and choose more original scenes, determined by their personal preferences. The fact that they only rarely did so, confirms the idea that stories outside the canon were not considered suitable to be depicted. Only little Christian art has remained from the private context of late antique villas: this lack of Christian objects seems to confirm the assumptions made mainly on the basis of sarcophagi.

An alternative explanation for the lack of use of the apocryphal repertoire of stories about the apostles could be that the apocryphal stories were more popular in the East (most of them were originally written in Greek) than in the West (where most art and poetry that has been preserved was produced). However, the poetry of Gregory of Nazianzus and Amphilocheus of Iconium as well as the few objects we do have from the Eastern part of the empire do not confirm this idea: the use of non-canonical stories is equally restricted in Eastern as well as in Western art and poetry.

Allegorical images in art were probably specifically designed for visual expression: it is less surprising not to find the *Dominus legem dat* motif in poetry than the story of Paul and Thecla. The lack of poetic descriptions of the encounter of Peter and Paul and certainly the Peter reading scene can thus be explained. The depiction of Peter's water miracle was a continuation of the water miracle of Moses depicted in the catacombs, and was therefore a variation on a well-known theme. This might also explain its popularity in early Christian art in general: although it was an apocryphal story, it was 'legitimised' by the canonical story of Moses performing a similar miracle. This argument does not presume a censorship organised by the Church. More probably, the world of art and poetry reflects early Christian (higher) culture, in which there was no place (and no need) for the use of legends and writings outside the canon.

Christian art and poetry both tended to have a more varied repertoire and to work with more freedom of expression in the course of the fourth century. This chronological development seems more important than differences between poetical genres or different categories of art. The lack of depictions of the apostles in the catacombs is mainly due to the fact that most catacomb paintings were designed earlier than sarcophagi. Reliquaries, which seem to offer a more complex imagery, all date from the end of the fourth century and later. In the

same period, Christian poets found new forms to express themselves, other than epic.

The geographical origin of art and poetry does not seem to account for clear differences in the representation of the apostles. In both media, Rome was a central place. Most of the objects of art were produced in or around this city, whereas poets held the city in high esteem for reasons of tradition and symbolism. The primacy of Peter and Paul among the apostles was thus spread across the Roman Empire and local traditions—in as far as they existed in early times (especially in the West)—apparently had little chance to survive in poetry or art.

Both in poetry and art one did not feel the need to fully explore the repertoire of stories from the apostles. Although Biblical texts did not offer many leads to an extensive presence of the apostles, they describe several events in which the apostles play a significant role that were not used in the art and poetry from the early Christian period. Moreover, it seems that respect for the Biblical version of stories about the apostles resulted in works of art and poetry that had as little alterations to the original narrative as the change of medium allowed for. For similar reasons, little use was made of apocryphal stories.

In art, the variety in representation was even poorer than in poetry. However, the rich imagery of several objects dated around the year 400 already hints at the further burgeoning of images of the apostles in later times, when the apostles were definitely able to cross the borders of the textual medium in which they first became widely known. In the fourth century, the veneration of individual saints gradually became more popular, but did not yet reach its apogee: the apostles were still cautiously treated as venerable Biblical characters who were outshone by the figure of Christ.

General Conclusion

This study investigated the narrative imagery of the apostles as a means of comparison between art and poetry. It traversed the fields of Christian poetry and art from their very beginnings till the year 400. Gradually, the landscape became wider and more varied: it was not only enriched by new literary genres and new usages of visual material, but also by new subjects. Representations of the apostles were frequently found. Their presence is manifest both in poetry and art.

By way of conclusion, the results of this investigation are first confronted with the data provided by Arnold Provoost. Tendencies in the corpus are revealed and contextualised. Thereafter, explanations for similarities and differences between the representation in poetry and art are explored. At the end, it is asked what the consequences of the results of this research are for our view on the relationship between art and poetry in the early Christian period.

A Quantitative Approach

The whole range of remaining early Christian poetry and art in the third and fourth centuries has been investigated: a virtually complete corpus of apostle representations was created. The apostles appear in most Christian poetical genres and in categories of visual culture. Most depictions of the apostles are found on paintings, sarcophagi and gold glasses. These categories are also extant in abundant numbers in general, although only a small percentage of the once existing specimina remains. Many early Christian objects from the third and fourth centuries have been lost: textiles and mosaics are rare, as are decorations of houses and churches in general. Poetry seems to have been better transmitted: even if the tragedies by the Apollinariii might be an example of a lost genre (see 1.9), most genres probably remain, albeit in small numbers. The apostles occur most often in martyrs poetry and Biblical epics of the New Testament.

In absolute numbers, more material objects survive than poetical texts. This numerical aspect explains the repetition of images in the repertoire of early Christian art. As a result, a single representation in poetry accounts for a more significant part of its medium as a whole than is the case for a single representation in art. The large corpus of texts and objects used in this study makes it possible to provide a balanced view on the representation of the apostles.

Recently, Arnold Provoost investigated the imagery of early Christian art in detail. Although his corpus was more restricted than the corpus analysed in this book (cf. *Introduction* 2), it did cover precisely those kinds of images in which the apostles appear most often: images on sarcophagi and paintings from the Roman catacombs. The diagram (fig. A) that Provoost created on the basis of his data therefore provides a representative quantitative impression of early Christian imagery.

Images of the apostles are part of the Biblical-ecclesiastical ensemble. The diagram shows that this ensemble was well represented. The apostles gradually become a more important part of the Biblical-ecclesiastical imagery, from the turn of the third century onwards. Even during the decline in imagery around the middle of the fourth century, the number of apostle images is increasing. In the period 375–500 (Provoost's 'context five'), images of the apostles appear on up to one-third of the images in the Biblical-ecclesiastical ensemble. Most of the data of context five are from the decades around the year 400, which is the final period included in the present investigation. This period offers a more varied repertoire of apostolic representations, which seems to be related to the increasing number of apostle representations in art. Part of this new repertoire otherwise comes from the *arti minori*, which are not included in Provoost's data.

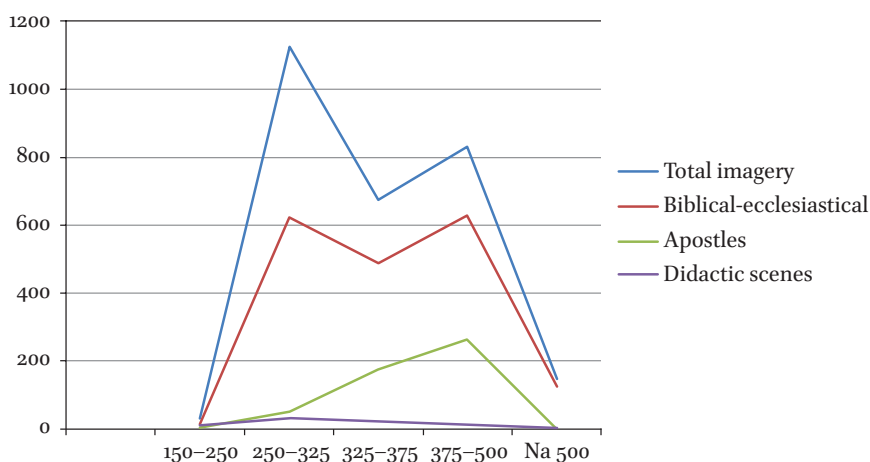


FIGURE A Provoost¹

¹ The diagram (originally in Dutch) has been kindly provided by Provoost *per litteras*, d.d. 18 June 2012. It is based on Provoost (2011a, b and c).

The diagram does not distinguish between different categories of materials. The research presented in the foregoing chapters, however, reveals that sarcophagi offer a more varied repertoire of apostle imagery than the catacombs. Gold glasses mainly contain images of the busts of the apostles. Mosaics probably contained many narrative images, as drawings from the now lost cycle of Paul in old Saint Paul's make clear. *Scrinia*, but reliquaries in particular, provide some original scenes with apostles, but overall many of them are decorated with non-figurative images.

The remaining objects do not cover the full wealth of iconographical variety existing in the early Christian period. The larger degree of variety in apostle stories referred to in poetry compared to art may therefore distort the view on creativity in early Christian visual culture. The poetical *tituli* by Ambrose, Prudentius and Paulinus may shed some light on lost visual material. At the same time, the *tituli* were part of the literary culture of late antiquity and it remains difficult to determine what they reveal about actually depicted imagery. However, it is significant that it is the hybrid genre of the *tituli* in which a greater wealth of narrative scenes comes to the fore: a glimpse of the potential of visual culture seems to be offered by this literary genre. The epigrams of Damasus come closest to the *tituli* in form and function, because they were equally short and visually displayed. They also had the same commemorative function as images and *tituli*.

The apostles are mentioned by virtually all great Christian poets of the fourth century. The genres in which the apostles appear can be roughly divided in (primarily) didactic poetry (Commodianus, Amphilocheus, Gregory of Nazianzus, some poems of Paulinus), pieces that were (mainly) written in and for a literary context (Juvenius, Proba, Claudian, Prudentius, Paulinus) and doctrinal treatises in verses (Hilary, Prudentius' *Psychomachia* and the so-called *Oratio consulis Ausonii versibus rhopalicis*).

Apostle Themes in Art and Poetry

Although the quantitative approach outlined above usefully puts the representation of the apostles in perspective, the content of these representations remains most important. It appears that the repertoires of art and poetry share some apostolic themes in considerable numbers. I discern two categories of directly comparable scenes. These categories both consist of representations that are present in both media and in numbers that suggest widespread popularity rather than the caprice of an individual poet or commissioner of art.

General Notions about the Apostles: The Twelve as Witnesses of Christ

A first category contains representations of the apostles that primarily express more general ideas, rather than hints at actual stories. These are often expressed in passages or images that are clearly not of a narrative nature, but also appear in certain aspects of representations of the apostles in narrative contexts. Some symbolical and other non-narrative references to the apostles are shared by art and poetry alike. Although not at the heart of this study, these representations had to be taken into account because of their importance and overlap with scenes of a primarily narrative nature. Similarities between art and poetry in representations from this first category include the special position of Peter and Paul and—closely connected to that—the *concordia apostolorum*. Another important aspect is the link between the apostles and texts and the relationship between the apostles and Christ. The second category is that of actual stories from Biblical or apocryphal writings. Several of these are represented in art and poetry alike in relatively large numbers: the betrayal of Judas, Peter's attempt to walk on the waves, the *traditio clavium*, Peter's denial and the martyrdom of Peter and Paul. The stories of the washing of the feet and Peter with the dog of Simon Magus also occur in both media.

The first category of images is ubiquitously present. Especially on sarcophagi, the apostles are represented very often as witnesses of the miracles of Christ. The apostles are depicted in a similar way to other figures who are carved out in the background: these anonymous witnesses have a function comparable to that of the apostles, but are more likely to represent the crowd that was present at Christ's miracles or otherwise Christians from earlier times (Eichner's *Hintergrundreliefschicht*, see *Introduction* 4.1.2). In most cases, the apostles are not depicted or mentioned out of interest for the twelve individuals who followed Christ, but as secondary figures who testify to the veracity of Christ's miracles. They also appear in scenes that visualise stories in which the apostles were not present according to the Biblical account. Apart from theological concerns, craftsmen probably also used representations of the apostles as bystanders to embellish scenes of Christ out of artistic motives.

In poetry, this function of the apostles is clearly referred to in Juvenecus' Biblical epic, but is less important in other genres. In the textual medium, the veracity of Christ's acts was more easily and in a more sophisticated way 'proven' by citations of passages from the Old Testament (or pagan texts—most notably the *Aeneid*—that were sometimes interpreted as typological works), than by regularly mentioning the presence of the apostles. Typological

references to the apostles occur a few times in poetry, in the oeuvre of Prudentius. Two of the three typological passages are found in Prudentius' *Dittochaeon*: this suggests that typological images of the apostles were also part of the repertoire of images in early Christian art, but no examples remain from our period.

In scenes depicting Christ as a teacher, the emphasis is naturally on the teacher and not on his pupils. Nevertheless, the apostles are clearly recognizable and the scene was often depicted, already in an early phase of figural Christian decoration in the catacombs. The scene of Christ teaching his apostles is more often depicted than it is described in poetical texts. This kind of representation is of course primarily based on the biblical narrative about the twelve disciples of Christ.

Most images depict the apostles with attributes that hint at texts or text-writing. Especially the scroll, which was a standard attribute of all apostles, but also a *capsella* placed in the front of a scene with Christ teaching the apostles referred to the apostles as writers of parts of the New Testament and representatives of the Biblical message. In poetry this idea was expressed in citations of parts of the New Testament written by apostles—especially the Pauline epistles—and by direct references to the act of writing performed by the apostles (especially Paul and John).

Peter, Paul and the Others

As in other representations of the apostles, the twelve are more clearly distinguished in poetry: in art all apostles bear a scroll as attribute, despite the fact that most of them did not contribute to the text of the Bible. Only occasionally names are written to images of the apostles to distinguish them or to distinguish between the evangelists and the other apostles (e.g. on the Concordius sarcophagus). However, it is important to note that almost no traces of painting survive on early Christian sarcophagi: since details were sometimes executed in paint, the identification of the apostles by their names might have been more common than we tend to assume.

Since individual apostles are hardly distinguished from each other in art, almost all references to canonical stories in which one of the 'minor' apostles is a central figure come from poetry. It has to be noticed, however, that the present corpus may be distorted due to the lack of surviving Biblical cycles from late antiquity, whereas the equivalent in verses, the Biblical epic, has remained (Juvenius and—to a lesser degree—Proba). These Biblical cycles may well

have existed: at least the presence of such a cycle in the basilica of Saint Paul in Rome is certain. The *tituli* also point to the existence of Biblical cycles. These were not devoted to one apostle alone.

In contrast with the other apostles, Peter and Paul frequently function as characters on their own. They are also distinguished from the other apostles by the place they hold in the composition and—from the middle of the fourth century—by their facial features. Peter and Paul are nearly always depicted near Christ, e.g. in the *Dominus legem dat* scene. In this scene Peter and Paul are most often depicted with Christ alone, i.e. without the other apostles. They are clearly more important than the twelve as a group, but always remain secondary figures to their master. In a way the same phenomenon occurs where Peter's or Paul's martyrdom seems to be depicted mainly as an addition to the depiction of the Passion.

Although Peter and Paul are often depicted together—many instances of which express the so-called *concordia apostolorum*—, their position is not exactly similar: Peter is depicted much more often and more scenes were developed for him than for Paul. At the end of the fourth century, more scenes of Paul appear, but still in restricted numbers. The number of representations of Peter and Paul in early Christian art in Provoost is revealing:² scenes in which Peter is the main character (canonical and apocryphal) include 12,76% of the 2812 fresco-ensembles and sarcophagi that Provoost investigated, Paul only 3,27%. On sarcophagi alone the percentage of Petrine images increases to 14,58%. Since Peter is not depicted in the first and last phases of Christian art as distinguished by Provoost (i.e. 150–250 and 500–800), these numbers (for frescoes and sarcophagi together) augment for the period most relevant to this study: $\pm 12\%$ in the periods 250–325 and 375–500, but even 17,5% in the period 325–375.

In poetry, the situation is somewhat different: Paul matches the popularity of Peter in this medium. The difference between art and poetry is not in narrative scenes from the lives of the apostles, but in the frequency of citations from Paul's letters. The two apostles' honorary position in art is in poetry expressed in titles such as *principes apostolorum*. The *concordia apostolorum* is particularly tangible in the work of poets such as Damasus, Ambrose and Prudentius. It reflects a broader tendency of emphasising unity in the Roman Empire in a period in which this unity seemed more contested than before.

2 Provoost (2011d) 33.

The Apostles and the Tradition

In some pictorial ensembles pagan and Christian imagery is combined. In art, few images show this syncretism with apostle images; however, one example is the sarcophagus of the Dioscuri, where Peter is depicted on the short side of a sarcophagus and the Dioscuri on the front. However, the apostles were only incidentally depicted closely together with pagan figures (e.g. with decorative Gorgon heads and with the muses), and never with pagan gods or heroes. The appearance of the apostles was clearly derived from ancient perception of intellectuals, especially their clothes, footwear and beard. Although several widespread images in early Christian art reflect the schemes of traditional imagery, this kind of influence from non-Christian art forms is absent in the repertoire of apostolic images.

In poetry, more freedom to combine the Christian and pagan realm existed: Proba's cento is the culmination of this syncretic tendency. Other poets constantly refer to classical pagan authors and literature via intertextual references. But the apostles are not equalled to or compared with fixed pagan figures: references to them only occasionally contain allusions to pagan literature deemed appropriate to the particular context in which the apostles occur. Moreover, juxtaposing pagan figures and apostles is rare in the field of poetry, as it is in the visual arts.

Narrative Apostle Stories

The corpus of images from the second category of narrative apostle representations shows the popularity of Peter, but especially the predominant funerary context of remaining Christian art, since most scenes can easily be connected with the afterlife. Examples are scenes from the Passion (Judas' betrayal) and the often represented martyrdom of Peter and Paul. Their martyrdom proper is not depicted, which reveals the same reluctance as that with regard to images of Christ on the cross. Instead, the scene of the arrest of Peter or Paul is introduced. Sometimes the cause of death is also depicted: a cross or a sword. In general, however, only few details are provided. Depictions of martyrdom remain largely a-historical, although the place of the martyrdom of Paul is indicated on some sarcophagi and a sarcophagus from Berja shows a probable depiction of Nero in the context of Peter's and Paul's condemnation.

A similar situation occurs in poetry, where explicit descriptions of bloodshed or cruel details are absent, although poetry provides more details than art. The places of martyrdom of Peter and Paul are described (but especially

the *memoriae* contemporaneous to the period in which the poems were written) and the emperor Nero is sometimes mentioned.

One would expect that scenes from the life of Paul were depicted more often, especially on objects ordered by the elite to which Paul's intellectual background logically appealed. This hypothesis cannot be verified, however, since early Christian (figurative) objects from a private non-funerary context are rare. Remaining examples of e.g. an oil lamp, a belt buckle and literary references to Biblical scenes on clothes (by Asterius of Amasea) do suggest that Biblical images had a greater prominence than the inventory of actually remaining art suggests.

For apostles other than Peter and Paul, appealing stories were scarce or not provided by the most authoritative sources. Exceptions are Judas' betrayal and Thomas' disbelief: these stories indeed are sometimes referred to. John is relatively often found, partly because of his authorship of the gospel on his name. It is surprising to find only little interest in the lives of the apostles reflected in the visual arts. The corpus of late antique reliquaries provide an eloquent example: the reliquary of San Nazaro is thought to have contained the relics of Thomas and Andrew, but does not show any scene from their lives. It has a scene of Christ teaching the apostles instead, in which Peter and Paul are distinguished from the other apostles by their clothes.

Especially among the references to the apostles found in the second category of representations, a distinction is to be made between canonical and non-canonical stories. Particularly so in the case of the apostles, whose authorship was an important criterion for canonicity of a text. Since apocryphal stories about the apostles were abundant in late antiquity, it was expected to find them represented in considerable numbers. However, the investigation of apostle themes in art and poetry reveals significant differences between canonical and non-canonical stories.

Canonical Stories

The use of canonical apostle stories has several features that are not shared by that of the non-canonical repertoire. In general, the gospels are the most important source of inspiration for canonical stories. Again, this confirms the role of the apostles as figures secondary to Christ, since the son of God clearly was the key-figure for the four evangelists. It has been noticed that in several scenes in which Peter is an important character, Christ remains the principal figure, e.g. in the scene of Peter attempting to walk on the waves, the washing of the feet and the scene with the cock. Poetry shows a greater variety of

canonical stories than art, even if we exclude the references to stories in the *tituli*. Famous stories like that of the descent of the Holy Spirit and the Transfiguration were not depicted in the third and fourth centuries.

Only three narrative, canonical scenes occur in art, but not in poetry. Peter is a central figure in all of them: the washing of the feet (although the focus is on Christ in this scene, Peter is always depicted), Ananias and Sapphira and the raising of Tabitha. The latter two scenes are particularly suitable in a funerary context, since they express both punishment and resurrection: the two most important aspects of the life after death in Christian theology. The images are all from the second half of the fourth century. This feature confirms the particular attention paid to Peter in early Christian art, which is revealed especially by the popularity of the scenes from the Petrine trilogy. In poetry almost all references to Peter that have not been visualised come from one particular author: Gregory of Nazianzus. Most of them are referred to in the context of dogmatics. Although Peter clearly was the most important apostle in poetry as well as in art, his position on images is relatively more important than in verse.

The *tituli* about the apostles are remarkably consistent as far as their source of inspiration is concerned: they all refer to canonical stories. The *tituli* also show a glimpse of the variety of objects of art that has not come down to us: of eleven *tituli* about the apostles in early Christian poetry, only two subjects are actually found in art until the year 400: Peter's attempts to walk on the waves and Judas' betrayal. The other *tituli* mainly consist of descriptions of stories from the New Testament, but also of two Old Testament scenes that are explained in an allegorical way. These latter scenes may have depicted the Old Testament scene proper, without visual reference to the apostles (although experienced viewers might have noticed the typological layer also without reading the *tituli*). The *tituli* of course (pretend to) represent themes from monumental art: the themes that they describe were therefore not necessarily depicted in other forms of art too.

If the *tituli* are excluded from the inventory of 'poetry-only references', only few stories remain that were used in poetry alone. Some of them are negative for the status of the apostles and were therefore less attractive for the visual repertoire (cf. the conflict of Peter and Paul or Paul persecuting Christians). Others do not seem to refer to a proper story or include dogmatic issues (especially in the poetry of Gregory). The depiction of some stories is not certain (e.g. Paul's lapidation). One actual story remains that has not left any trace in the repertoire of early Christian art: the exorcism on a slave possessed by Apollo was mentioned by Paulinus (c. 19,96–7), but very briefly so.

Non-Canonical Stories

Regarding non-canonical apostle stories, art and poetry show a similar pattern of reception. They apply a restricted repertoire of these stories and more often refer to them at the end of the fourth century than in earlier periods. Apocryphal stories were not very popular among early Christian poets: if the martyrdom of Peter and Paul is excluded, only Paulinus clearly refers to several apocryphal stories. However, even in his case this remains exceptional. In this case, the *tituli* closely belong to the poetic tradition, since they do not refer to apocryphal apostles stories. Nevertheless, some of the most popular apostle scenes in art are derived from apocryphal sources: those of the martyrdom of Paul, the martyrdom of Peter and Peter's water miracle.

Both media make use of a few stories that did not find a place in the repertoire of the other medium. These scenes nearly all concern Peter or Paul: the stories of Paul and the lion (Commodianus), Peter speaking to the apostles after the Crucifixion (Proba) and Martinianus saved by Paul's letters (Paulinus) are not iconographically attested, but all occur (once) in poetry. A fourth scene to be added is the only story of another apostle, namely John who survives boiling oil (Ambrose hymn 6,29–31). In art, Peter's water miracle, Paul and Thecla (and Paul's arrest by Thamyras), Peter healing the blind widow and the meeting of Peter and Paul can be mentioned. Most of these scenes come from the *Acta Petri* and the *Acta Pauli*.

Other non-canonical scenes that occur in one medium only, can barely be called narrative (e.g. the Peter reading scene or the *Dominus legem dat*) or at least are not used as 'stories' in poetry or art, i.e. an element is taken from a story but no sequence of events is implied. An example of the latter is the connection between Matthew and Bartholomew, the evangelist giving his gospel to the apostle. The apocrypha are the main source for the corpus of non-canonical stories used either in poetry or art. The story of Martinianus (c. 24,21–438) seems to have been a local legend from Nola and is atypical, because Paulinus placed the story in the post-apostolic period.

Shared Tendencies in the Representation of the Apostles in Art and Poetry

This overview of the apostles' representation and the sources of inspiration that were of influence in art and poetry reveals several tendencies in the early Christian representation of Jesus' closest followers. First of all, the canon was

a deciding factor: not only was it the most important source of information for stories about the apostles, it also presented them as witnesses of Christ's message—which became the major apostolic theme in early Christian art—and was believed to be partly the result of the writing activities of those same apostles. Most apostles remained anonymous members of the group of the twelve, due to the general reverence for the Biblical canon in which only little was written about them. Although Christ was the central figure of Christian thought, the apostles were the Biblical figures who were mentioned most often after him in art as well as in poetry.

Another trend shared by both fields is the focus on Peter and Paul as a pair and the twelve apostles as a group. The *concordia apostolorum* of the former arises from the middle of the fourth century onwards, the *concordia duodecim* is present from the start. In art, this is visible in the representation of either Peter and Paul together (most often with Christ) or Christ and the twelve apostles, including Peter and Paul. In the latter case, the two main apostles are often distinguished from the others by their place in the composition. In poetry, the *concordia duodecim* appears in the Biblical epic of Juvencus in particular. The focus on Peter and Paul in poetical texts, which do not even mention the other apostles in most cases, is obvious.

Both art and poetry show a tendency towards a growing interest in individual apostles: around the year 400 several apostles make their first cautious entrance in art and poetry as individual saints, although only few apostles are represented more frequently, especially Judas, Thomas and John. Peter, however, was frequently represented from the beginnings of Christian art and poetry, and Paul soon followed him, although the latter was most often depicted as a counterpart of Peter in the *concordia apostolorum* images. In poetry Ambrose and Prudentius devoted one hymn to the two apostles together, whereas most of their martyr hymns are devoted to individual saints.

At the end of the fourth century, Church leaders like Damasus and Ambrose emphasised the importance of relics and promoted the cult of the martyrs. The growing popularity of the cult of the saints is reflected by references to individual apostles in poetry and art. In poetry, these references are often explicitly linked to the cult of martyrs. The popularity of different saints might of course also have been an incentive for commissioners of art to order scenes in which apostles other than Peter and Paul or the group of the twelve were emphasised. However, the representation of 'minor' apostles remained fairly limited.

In art, Judas is never depicted in other contexts than that of the Passion; scenes of the twelve apostles most often include Paul, who replaced Judas the betrayer. In poetry, his presence among the twelve is mentioned more frequently, but poets always hint at Judas' betrayal in one way or another. The

increase in depictions of Judas at the end of the fourth century is strongly related to the rising popularity of depictions of the cycle of the Passion. Moreover, it might have been easier to pay attention to an act of betrayal in this period, when Christianity was more firmly established than in earlier times. Prudentius' praise of Judas through the vice *Auaritia* (*Psychomachia* 529–35) supports this idea, which is also clearly expressed by the singular depiction of the hanging Judas separated from other scenes of the Passion on the Lipsanoteca from Brescia.

At the same time—and contrary to this development—a certain triumphalism became part of early Christian society due to the successes in theological and political matters: this encouraged the interest in the cult of the saints, but opposed interest in Judas the betrayer. He is therefore absent in the work of many poets who had a function in Church in the second half of the fourth century, such as Ambrose and Paulinus.

Yet another aspect of the representation of the apostles is the relative lack of details referred to in art and poetry. Art from late antiquity in general is characterised by reluctance in the depiction of details, whereas late antique poetry is characterised by rich and detailed descriptions. This difference is less apparent in the representation of the apostles than was expected. Images of the apostles indeed show a lack of details. In poetical passages about the apostles, details were omitted less often than in art. Still, especially the versification of the gospels by Juvenius shows that even the relatively few details mentioned in the Biblical account were often not versified. Other passages reflect the late antique preference for verbosity, e.g. the hymns of Ambrose and Prudentius with some details about the places of martyrdom of Peter and Paul. However, the focus in these works is more on the late fourth century basilicas than on the historical places of martyrdom. There were reasons other than aesthetics to insert these passages: they were added out of a concern for the exaltation of the city of Rome and as a reflection of the importance of places of pilgrimage (see below). The praise for the Roman emperor—who built the memorial basilicas for Peter and Paul—also played a role.

Furthermore, details are scarce in poetical passages on the apostles proper as well as on apostle images. Theological reasons probably were a decisive reason for early Christians not to use much detail in their references to the apostles. The Biblical account—the main source of inspiration of poets and craftsmen—often lacks an indication of time and place or other details about the circumstances of a story. Adding details to a story known from the Bible had the risk of offending other people. Moreover, if these details could be deduced from the Biblical text—or entirely invented—in order to embellish representations of Biblical stories in poetry and art, such details would

logically have referred to Judea. But Judea was a peripheral region that did not interest many people in the Roman Empire; its 'otherness' potentially even repelled people from the Christian religion. Such details were therefore not to be expected.

Although details were often omitted, several works of late antique art still have abundant imagery. The *horror vacui* that is characteristic of many sarcophagi in particular resulted in the depiction of a large number of scenes and figures. In scenes of miracles of Christ, the depiction of the apostles—who were not always mentioned in the sources but were known to have followed Christ and could therefore reasonably be assumed to have been often present—was a welcome way out of all too sober imagery.

In general, the use of Biblical references was a sign of adherence to Christianity. Furthermore, whereas pagan imagery and literature were part of early Christian culture, specific Christian ideas are rarely mentioned by pagans (unless they worked on order or in a satirical or otherwise criticising way, as in the case of Claudian and possibly Palladas). Only in the late fourth century Christianity gradually became part of the elite's cultural tradition.

The Representations of the Apostles Explained

The constitution of the corpus of apostolic representations as it is and the tendencies that can be distinguished within it have to be explained, in order to be able to reflect on the relationship between art and poetry in late antiquity. A further interpretation of the aspects of the apostles' representation that are discussed above is expounded below.

The relation between representations of Peter and Paul is one of the most intriguing aspects of the present investigation. Their popularity is overwhelming. It has been signalled that Peter had a more prominent place in art, whereas Paul equalled Peter's popularity in poetry. Paul's popularity was mainly based on his prominent place in the canon, whereas Peter was more often referred to as a historical personage whose life was of great interest to later Christians, and to bishops in particular. The one scene from Paul's life that was regularly referred to in art and poetry alike was his martyrdom. This scene seems to have been part of the *concordia apostolorum*, since it is almost always depicted and described with the martyrdom of Peter. Paul was more popular in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire, from which only few objects of art survive. In Greek poetry, however, Amphilochius and Gregory do not reflect Paul's popularity by mentioning a great diversity of stories. Gregory does often refer to Paul, but

the dominance of the gospel stories about Christ (and his disciples, including Peter) was strong.

Peter, the Apostle Popular to All

Due to their role in the canonical books, Peter and Paul were more attractive to identify with than the other apostles. Especially Peter was frequently depicted as an individual apostle on sarcophagi. Apparently, he appealed to the elite that bought these coffins. Several reasons seem to account for this.

First of all, Peter was the leader of the apostles. As such he also was an attractive apostle to be associated with for people from the leading class and the most logical apostle to approach for intercession. This was important for the hereafter and therefore a logical reason for the choice of scenes in a funerary context. Moses was generally seen as an important leader from the Old Testament. One of the most popular Petrine scenes, Peter's water miracle, seems to have been closely connected with the canonical water miracle of Moses depicted in the catacombs. Its success there and the general popularity of water scenes in early Christian art—used to refer to baptism—are factors that explain the popularity of Peter's water miracle in art, although it was not a canonical story.

Peter's popularity also was an expression of his leadership of the Christian community. This idea was of course also expressed in the *traditio clauium*. In poetry references to Peter as rock of the Church highlighted the same line of thought. Due to Peter's (supposed) leading position among the apostles and in the first community in Rome, the elite must have considered him a suitable character to identify with. This elite had strong connections with Rome, even those of its members who lived outside the eternal city (e.g. Paulinus of Nola). By choosing Peter as the main subject of an image or text, aristocrats connected themselves to power via an undisputed Christian saint who was highly esteemed by all people, also by the masses.

Ordinary people probably appreciated Peter not so much for his leading position, as well as for his vulnerability. Peter was an easy character to identify with, since his failure to understand the entire Christian message was clearly presented in the Bible, yet he was exalted among the apostles. The main story represented in art that at first sight has nothing to do with funeral themes—which is the story of Peter's attempt to walk on the waves—is depicted on several different materials and mentioned in different literary genres. The presence of this story primarily emphasises the human nature of Peter. This is most clearly

expressed by Prudentius in his *Contra Symmachum praefatio* 2, and also explains the popularity of the story of the denial. The recognisable human nature of Peter explains his popularity vis-à-vis Paul, the other great apostle. Especially on sarcophagi, where the deceased probably expressed his hope of an afterlife, for which forgiveness seemed necessary (cf. e.g. Matt 19.25), Peter was more suitable a character to depict than the apostle Paul, of whom only faults committed before his conversion are described in the Bible.

The denial, expressed in the scene with the cock, not only was an example of Peter's far from flawless life as a follower of Christ, but it was also part of the story of the Passion, which made the scene even more suitable for a funerary context. One of the few stories of a 'minor' apostle that is referred to more than once in poetry and art is the story of Thomas, probably for the same reasons of identification. This funerary context was of high importance in the choice of many apostle images. The *traditio clavium* scene shows Peter as gatekeeper of heaven. This idea was particularly appropriate to a funerary context: the apostle admits or refuses the entrance of the deceased in paradise.

At the same time, Peter's position as a judge about eternal life and death probably reflects the growing importance and self-confidence of bishops, those of Rome in particular. They had a clear personal interest in the exaltation of Peter, since they presented themselves as successors of the apostle. But not only of Peter, but also of the other apostles. Apart from Damasus' own projects, there are no clear examples of papal interference in artistic matters, but the increase of representations of the apostles contemporaneous to the appearance of Roman bishops who more vigorously emphasised their apostolic pedigree, is remarkable. In this period, the bishops Damasus, Ambrose and Gregory of Nazianzus wrote their poetry, followed by Prudentius and Paulinus: the repertoire of apostolic representations in poetry also increased. Given the small similarity between the themes in art and poetry in the whole early Christian period, including the last quarter of the fourth century, it seems that both poetry and art in this period independently reflect the growing awareness of the bond of the apostles with Rome.

Concordia apostolorum and concordia duodecim

The *concordia apostolorum* and *concordia duodecim* were also welcome concepts for those who administrated the Church. Both ideas expressed a unity among leading clergy and ordinary Christians that was far from obvious in late antiquity. The *concordia duodecim*, which was expressed in images of Christ teaching the group of apostles, became less popular at the end of the fourth

century, when interest in the lives of individual saints increased. However, in poetry it did not become a popular theme on its own. The reason probably is the nature of the two media: whereas the content of Christ's message could be made clear in poetry more directly than in visual art, in the latter medium it was rather the idea of teaching that was expressed. People could take the apostles as an example of their own appropriate attitude towards the Christian message. This idea was also used by early Christian poets, but more explicitly: most elaborately by Prudentius, who extensively compared himself to Peter in *c. Symm. praef. 2*. In depictions of the apostles, comparisons did not become equally explicit: Biblical figures never have the likeness of the deceased on sarcophagi. The deceased were associated with the apostles in a direct way only occasionally, most often through the image of an *orans* between two apostle-like figures (often thought to represent Peter and Paul). More remarkable are some images with the deceased appearing among a group of apostles, as is the case on the sarcophagus of Stilicho.

The martyrdom of Peter and Paul was another scene that fitted ecclesiastical politics. It was the death of Peter and Paul in Rome that gave this city its main theological prestige. The story was well-known and actively referred to by leading figures of the Church of Rome. Therefore, and because it was an old story mentioned by Church Fathers in an early stage, the story of the martyrdom was the one apocryphal story that could penetrate the repertoires of early Christian art and poetry alike. Moreover, the story was connected to Rome, the cultural centre of the Roman empire. However, the Roman character of the scene was mainly emphasised in poetry. The magnificence of the basilicas for Peter and Paul in Rome also contributed to their status, although the construction of the basilica of Saint Paul took place too late in the fourth century to influence a large part of the corpus of apostle representations. The popularity of these basilicas as places of pilgrimage clearly outshone the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople that did not find its place in the apostle representation in poems or visual material.

Besides Peter, Paul evidently was the other individual apostle with whom someone from higher circles longed to identify: his intellectual background and contribution to the New Testament were particularly attractive. However, these were both expressed easier in texts than in images. For that reason, references to Paul are more abundant in poetry than in art. Nevertheless, among the apostles Paul is depicted most often after Peter. Images of the *concordia apostolorum* were of course also convenient representations for the elite: this might have been an additional incentive for members of the Church to propagate this concept, which was communicated in a direct way by means of gold glasses and mosaics.

Although there does not seem to have been active censorship in poetry and art by the Church, most poems and a considerable number of images were produced or ordered by members of the clergy. Moreover, the message spread in Church influenced laymen and their consumption of art and poetry. In this way, the views of the Church and the representation of the apostles in art and poetry were inextricably linked in late antiquity.

The Underrepresented Apostles

Reasons for the lack of details in both art and poetry may be found in the production process. The craftsmen of early Christian artefacts were most probably the same people who produced secular art too. Art might occasionally have been produced in larger workshops, but the small differences between different objects—also in scenes that depict the same story—seems to point to a certain freedom in the work of craftsmen. The differences are small (e.g. in the scene with the cock: the bird can be either standing on a column or on the ground and there are six different types of the animal anyway) and do not affect the overall interpretation of the scene. It is implausible to explain the differences from a desire to change the meaning of a well-known scene, since art was often not exhibited in circumstances that stimulated detailed observation.

Most details are probably to be accounted for by practical considerations. Craftsmen were most often bound to a standard repertoire offered to or specifically ordered by the commissioners of art. Far from being Romantic artists concerned with the most individualistic expression of their most individualistic emotions, the craftsmen did their job. Nevertheless, at least some of them might have tried to emulate their colleagues in the execution of details. As such, they resemble early Christian poets, who as representatives of a still forceful classical tradition tried to emulate their predecessors.

But apart from the way of production, the lack of details regarding time and place and other matters is also the result of a genuine lack of interest in this kind of information. References to the martyrdom of Peter and Paul are exemplary in this respect. The metaphorical meaning of scenes in (funerary) Christian art was more important than their historical dimension, which emphasised the temporality and restricted locality of events from the life of Christ. Therefore, scenes on objects are rarely shown in chronological order, in contrast with the way of presenting stories in the Biblical epic. For the same reason, the apostles were mainly depicted as witnesses and preachers of the divine message.

A similar situation occurs in poetry other than Biblical epic. Although Ambrose's and Prudentius' hymns on Peter and Paul—in which their martyrdom is central—are among the most famous examples of poetic references to the apostles, they actually reveal little details about the apostles' deaths. In other words, the narrative aspect is restricted in the representation of the apostles, both in art and poetry.

The lack of references to apostles other than Peter and Paul mainly reflects the lack of information given about them in the Biblical account. There was little reason to refer to them. It has been noticed above that scenes of their lives were even lacking on reliquaries that contained their remains. Maybe these reliquaries were originally made for other relics. Reliquaries such as that from the San Nazaro church were expensive and might therefore have been reused. However, given the popularity of the cult of the saints and the presentation of reliquaries on the feast days of martyrs, this explanation seems rather improbable. Therefore, the main reason probably was that the apocryphal stories of 'minor' apostles were not well-known among the clergy who ordered the reliquaries. The clergy did not show a particular interest in the apocryphal lives of the apostles in poetry either.

The Difference Made by the Production Process

The larger variety of apostle scenes in poetry compared to art might be due to the loss of many material objects, but the different production processes of art and poetry may also account for it. In poetry the link between design and product was direct: the poet himself composed the verses with the content that he had in mind. He was bound by social and cultural conventions, but worked rather independently. Moreover, one of these cultural conventions was the status of Homer and Vergil in poetry, who were both poets constructing a large narrative in their work that might have been a stimulus for the use of stories in Christian poetry. Early Christian poets also clearly knew each other's work and referred to it.

In art, most representations of the apostles were produced for private customers who had to make their wishes clear to the craftsmen who executed the decoration. Or, more probably, customers followed common practice or were advised by the workshops. Ultimately, then, the kind of scenes on offer could probably be traced back to priests who advised craftsmen on appropriate images. Due to the large demand for sarcophagi, it was useful to make them in serial production, at least in the first, rough form. The decoration of sarcophagi in most cases seems to have been determined by their producers, who

maybe showed catalogues with examples to their clients. This might have been a welcome practice to many, since commissioners of sarcophagi (or catacomb paintings) were not necessarily people who had an artistic interest.

Apart from these considerations, a traditional tendency in early Christian art might have obstructed the introduction of new characters for a while and explain why the 'minor' apostles were still rarely mentioned at a time when their relics were already venerated (which is testified for by Paulinus and Ambrose among others).

Another difference between art and poetry might also have been at stake in this respect: the price. A more elaborate decoration was more expensive. For the poets, who often had a function in Church or were financially independent, efficiency or cost reduction was not a main issue.

For those customers who were not constrained by practical concerns such as these and who had a particular interest in visual art or in certain scenes, sarcophagi with an extraordinary imagery were designed, e.g. the Servanne sarcophagus, which might depict Judas with a Janus head and also otherwise has a rather unusual set of images. Another example is a sarcophagus from Berja with Peter and Paul before Nero. The reasons for this kind of highly original imagery are difficult to retrieve without information about the specific context of the object on which it appears. Some very luxurious pieces of early Christian art also show remarkable depictions: the Lipsanoteca from Brescia and the Carrand diptych. These were probably produced on demand and ordered by people who were involved in ecclesiastical matters or highly interested in them. The Christian imagery on the diptych is remarkable, since most of these diptychs from late antiquity have a traditional pagan repertoire (e.g. the Symmachorum/Nicomachorum diptych).

The creativity that is visible in the above mentioned pieces of art counterbalances the greater variety in early Christian poetry as it appears in the corpus under review. Probably objects of art also showed more variety than is now visible. Nevertheless, the apostles' strong connection to written texts and canonicity certainly stimulated their presence in literature in a particular way.

The Difference Made by the Customers

Differences between visual and poetical representations of the apostles may also for a large part have been determined by the context in which both were used. The main figure who represented Christian identity was Christ himself. Therefore, most representations of the apostles primarily support the figure of Christ. In a funerary context—which is the context of a large majority of

the remaining images of Christian art—Christ was a central figure, because he guaranteed an afterlife for those who had followed him. With Christ, saints were also called upon as intercessors on behalf of the deceased. Although the concern for salvation and intercession is not always explicit and some imagery might have been chosen for other reasons too (e.g. showing the core of the Christian message or self-representation of the deceased) it is most logical to accept the idea of a connection of the images on sarcophagi and in the catacombs to the funerary context in which they were used: most images of apostles indeed seem to confirm this idea. The importance of these themes becomes only more probable in the case of images that were not seen by other people and might have been depicted as a message to the deceased, God and the saints only. The primary aim of the decoration on sarcophagi and catacomb paintings does thus not seem to have been a presentation of the deceased, but a display of notions concerning death and its capitulation to Christian faith. The faith in intercession by the saints is testified for by the many inscriptions *ad catacumbas* (the modern church of San Sebastiano), but also by the common image of the deceased between two apostle-like figures.

Most poetry was not written in a strict funerary context: poems mentioning the apostles are part of the genre of epic, didactic poetry and hymns. This difference in context might account for differences between themes in poetry and art: poets were not so much bound to themes concerning life, death and salvation. Although they frequently referred to them, stories about sin and repentance were less compelling for them than for those who invented most visual scenery.

Both art and poetry were primarily consumed by an elite audience, which might account for the absence of apocryphal stories in both media. These stories lacked appeal for them. Early Christian poets and commissioners of art were part of the leading class and took over the ideas spread by the Church. Some of them, the poets in particular, were even part of the ecclesiastical hierarchy themselves. Apocryphal stories were not an obvious source of inspiration. Most apocrypha originated in the Greek part of the Roman Empire. Most poetry and art came from the Western, Latin-speaking part.

Both media reflect the central position of the city of Rome, which was the centre of art production and the cultural centre of the literary world. Moreover, it was a city with a particularly prominent see, because of historical, (Church-) political and religious reasons. The martyrs of Rome were particularly propagated by the clergy, also from people outside Rome: the Milanese bishop Ambrose summoned other people to celebrate the feast of Peter and Paul outside Rome at the end of his twelfth hymn. Moreover, the former capital was a popular place for pilgrimage.

Therefore, Peter and Paul were attractive subjects for poets: subjects that appealed to more people than to Romans alone and therefore increased the potential readership of their work. This aspect made the two apostles more appealing for writers than the few other martyrs whose cult was also promoted, e.g. Lawrence from Rome or Gervase and Protase from Milan. Obviously, among those who ordered objects of art, more people were interested in Peter and Paul than in other saints too. Especially at the end of the fourth century, the frequent presence of Peter and Paul in art and poetry also stimulated people to adhere to the existing tradition of praise for these two apostles. Commissioners of art and poets who wanted to reach a large audience logically preferred Peter—and to a lesser degree Paul—to the other apostles.

At the end of the fourth century, the situation slightly began to change. Since Christ had sent out his apostles over the world, according to the New Testament, local traditions arose about apostles visiting even the most outward places of the world. These stories are partly preserved in the apocryphal writings. With the emergence of the cult of relics, those traditions became even more visible. For the period before the fifth century, local identities based on the representation of the apostles seem to have been only rarely built via Christian decoration programmes or Christian (Greek and Latin) poetry. The main exception is of course the representation of Peter and Paul in Rome. Nevertheless, at the end of the fourth century, the situation seems to have been about to change. The apostles were more clearly distinguished from each other: they received individual features. This tendency eventually led to representations of the apostles with names written to every apostle and a characteristic appearance, comparable to the images of the apostles that can still be seen in the baptisteries in Ravenna. In poetry, it is precisely the promotion of relics that incited several authors to mention stories about the other apostles too, including apocryphal narratives.

The Apostles as Missing Link of the Relationship between Art and Poetry

It was expected that an investigation into the representation of the apostles in art and poetry would shed more light on the relationship between late antique art and poetry too. The presentation of the results of this study has shown that this expectation has only partly been met. Art and poetry show corresponding tendencies, but these are part of ideas and concepts that pervaded the entire late antique society. It has turned out to be difficult to precise the relation between the creative activities of poets and craftsmen via the representation of the apostles. Although art and poetry were indeed created/

ordered and consumed by the same small group of people, the different circumstances of consumption had a large impact on the nature of apostle scenes that were chosen. The scene of Peter's water miracle is a case in point: the fact that this scene, despite its popularity, was not introduced in early Christian poetry confirms the impression that emerges from this study as a whole: there was virtually no reciprocity in approach or ideas between poets and craftsmen or their commissioners, at least none that cannot be explained from their embeddedness in the same cultural environment.

Early Christian art certainly impressed some men of letters, but it did not inspire them to transfer themes that were popular on objects of art to the realm of poetry outside the specific genre of the *tituli*. The limited visibility of a considerable part of early Christian art might have contributed to this phenomenon. Similarly, poetry was not used as a source of inspiration for artistic work: maybe it was too early for Christian poetry to exert influence on other fields in the fourth century already, since a Christian poetic tradition was not widely spread before the last quarter of the century. The main source of inspiration in both media was the Bible instead of late antique art and poetry.

Whereas this book provides a broad view on many aspects of the representation of the apostles, future studies might use its results for adjacent subjects. Stretching the range of the corpus into the fifth or even the sixth century may result in intriguing observations, even more so since a shift towards local production processes might account for regional differences in representation of and identification with the individual apostles. A more direct confrontation of the apostles with characters from the pagan past, such as disciples or philosophers and miracle workers or mythical and historical heroes, may shed more light on the apostles' role as literary characters. The genres of pagan and Biblical epic, including the images from ancient editions of the *Aeneid* such as the *Vergilius Vaticanus*, seem particularly suitable subjects to that kind of research. The relationship between customers and the design of decorated objects is still vague. Further clarification of the circumstances of the production processes of early Christian art would contribute to the interpretation of the results of this study. Investigating the consumption of late antique art and poetry also seems a desirable direction of research.

This study has recorded the omnipresence of the apostles in art and poetry and the complex processes that determined the choice for one way of representing them or another. The fourth century has turned out to be a particularly rewarding period for research towards the apostles and their presence in poetry and the visual arts. With hindsight, the origins of the great variety in apostle representations in mediaeval culture are discernible already in the art and poetry from the end of this period. Again, the fourth century has shown to be a pivotal age in the transition from classical to medieval civilisation.

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Appendix 1

Overview of Canonical References to the Apostles in Art and Poetry

Canonical story about <i>Paul</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source	Poet mentioning the passage	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Pharisee, persecuting Christians	Phil 3.5–6/ Acts 9.1–2	1. Damasus 2. ps.-Ausonius	1. <i>Ep.</i> 1,1–5 2. <i>Oratio</i> 33–4	1. ≤384 2. ±400?	–	–
Conversion	Acts 9.3–8	1. Damasus 2. Gr. Naz. 3. Prudentius 4. ps.-Ausonius	1. <i>Ep.</i> 1,6–10 2. 1,2,1 499–501 3. <i>ditt.</i> 47,189–92 4. <i>Oratio</i> 34–5	1. ≤384 2. ±381–90 3. ±390–405? 4. ±400?	<i>Rep3</i> 291?	<i>End of the 4th century</i>
Vessel of divine election	Acts 9.15	1. Ambrose 2. Amph.	1. Hymn 12,11 2. <i>Seleuc.</i> 298	1. ±386–400 2. ±380	–	–
Lapidation	Acts 14.19	Damasus	<i>Ep.</i> 1,19	≤384	<i>Rep2</i> 70?, <i>Rep3</i> 291?	350–400
Exorcism on a slave inspired by Apollo	Acts 16.16–8	Paulinus	c.19,96–7	405	–	–
Bond with Luke (and Timothy)	(cf. Acts 17.15/ Col 4.14; 2/ Tim 4.11)	Gr. Naz.	1,1,22 1–2	±381–90	Carrand diptych	±400
Shipwreck on Malta/Miracle of the Viper	Acts 27.9–28.6	1. Damasus 2. Prudentius	1. <i>Ep.</i> 1,21 2. <i>c. Symm. praef.</i> 1,7–44	1. ≤384 2. 402–3	Carrand diptych	±400
Earns his own living	2 Cor 11.9; Phil 4.11 (Acts 18.3)	Gr. Naz.	1,2,10 549–50	±381–90	–	–

Appendix 1 (cont.)

Canonical story about <i>Paul</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source	Poet mentioning the passage	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Conflict with Peter in Antioch	Gal 2.11–4	Gr. Naz.	I,2,25 222–8	±381–90	–	–
Discord in the congregation at Corinth	1 Cor 1.12	Gr. Naz.	II,1,11 680; II,1,13 154	±381–90	–	–
Suffering in life	2 Cor 11,23–7	1. Damasus 2. Gr. Naz.	1. <i>Ep.</i> 1,16–9 2. 1,2,2 202–9	1. ≤384 2. ±381–90	– (cf. “ <i>Paul—martyrdom</i> ”)	–
Vision of heaven	2 Cor 12.2–5	1. Damasus 2. Gr. Naz. 3. ps.-Ausonius	1. <i>Ep.</i> 1,11–6 2. 1,2,1 326; 1,2,2 205 3. <i>Oratio</i> 35	1. ≤384 2. ±381–90 3. ±400?	<i>F435?</i> (cf. <i>Peter—Vision in Joppa</i>)	375–380
Giving to the poor (with Peter)	(cf. Acts 6.1–4 about Peter only)	Gr. Naz.	1,2,10 553–4	±381–90	–	–
Apostle of the heathens	e.g. 1 Tim 2.7	1. Ambrose 2. Amph. 3. Prudentius 4. ps.-Ausonius	1. Hymn 12,32 2. <i>Seleuc.</i> 299 3. <i>perist.</i> 2,461; <i>ditt.</i> 47,191–92; 1 <i>c. Symm.</i> <i>praeef.</i> 1–6 4. <i>Oratio</i> 34	1. ±386–400 2. ±380 3. ±390–405; ±390–405? 402–3 4. ±400?	–	–
As a writer	Letters	1. Prudentius 2. Paulinus	1. <i>perist.</i> 13,18 2. c.24,263–98	1. ±390–405? 2. ±400	–	–

Canonical story about <i>Paul</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source	Poet mentioning the passage	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Citing Paul (indication of author) for his scripture	1. Phil 3,19 2. 1 Cor 15,33 3. Letters 4. Rom 1,9, Phil 1,8 and 1 Thess 2,5 5. Gal 6.5 6. Eph 6.12	1. Comm. 2. Amph. 3. Gr. Naz. 4. Gr. Naz. 5. Gr. Naz. 6. Prudentius	1. <i>Instr.</i> 1,31,9 (cf. <i>Instr.</i> 2,13,13; 2,15,2; 2,24,2) 2. <i>Seleuc.</i> 75 3. I,1,12 35 4. I,2,24 25;27–8 5. II,1,12 517–21 6. <i>hamart.</i> 506–22	1. ±250–60 2. ±380 3. ±381–90 4. ±381–90 5. ±381–90 6. 396/7–404?	The way Paul is depicted in all Christian art, features	–
Canonical story about <i>Peter</i> referred to in art or poetry	Bible	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Fisher	Luke 5.1–5	Gr. Naz.	I,2,12 223	±381–90	Testini 116 (plate)	end of the 4th century
Vocation	Matt 4.18–22	Juvenius	1,421–9	329	– (cf. <i>Testini</i> 116)	–
Trying to walk on the waves	Matt 14.28–32	1. Juvenius 2. Prudentius 3. Paulinus 4. ps.-Claudian	1. <i>evang.</i> 3,93–126 2. <i>c. Symm. praef.</i> 2,21–43; <i>perist.</i> 7,61–5; <i>ditt.</i> 35,137–40	1. 329 2. 402–3; ±390–405?; ±390–405? 3. 402 4. ±400?	Rep1 365, Testini 34, Dura, San Giovanni al Fonte?, Aleander gemma?	±≥250

Appendix 1 (cont.)

Canonical story about <i>Peter</i> referred to in art or poetry	Bible	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
			3. c. 26,374–8 4. <i>Miracula</i> 13–4			
Rock of the Church	Matt 16.18	1. Juvenius 2. Ambrose 3. Gr. Naz. 4. Paulinus	1. <i>Eu.</i> 2. Hymn 1,15 3. 1,2,1 488; 1,2,12 222–4 4. <i>Ep.</i> 32,10,12	1. 329 2. 386 3. ±381–90 4. 404	– (cf. all scenes in which <i>Peter</i> is distinguished from the other apostles)	– (±350)
Gatekeeper of heaven/ <i>traditio clavium</i>	Matt 16.19	1. Juvenius 2. Damasus 3. Gr. Naz. 4. Prudentius 5. ps.-Ausonius	1. <i>evang.</i> 3,283–4 2. <i>Ep.</i> 4,2 3. 1,2,1 488 4. <i>perist.</i> 2,463–4 5. <i>Oratio</i> 32	1. 329 2. ≤384 3. ±381–90 4. ±390–405? 5. ±400?	Mosaic St Costanza, 15 sarcophagi Provoost (2011a) 70, jug (Spier (2007) no. 67)	≥350
Transfiguration	Matt 17.1–9	1. Juvenius 2. Ambrose 3. Gr. Naz.	1. 3,316–52 2. <i>Carm.</i> <i>tern. num.</i> 8; <i>titulus</i> 1 (x Peter) 3. 1,1,20 23–4	1. 329 2. ≤397 3. ±381–90	–	–
Washing of the feet	John 13.3–20	–	–	–	Rep1 58; Rep1 679; Rep3 53; Rep3 412	±366
Prophecy of Peter's future sufferings by Christ	John 21.18	Ambrose	Hymn 12,16	±386–400	–	–

Canonical story about <i>Peter</i> referred to in art or poetry	Bible	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Denial	Luke 22.54–62	1. Juvenicus 2. Ambrose 3. Prudentius	1. <i>evang.</i> 4,570–85 2. Hymn 1,15–28 3. <i>cath.</i> 1,45–68	1. 329 2. 386 3. ±390–405? (405)	Referred to in the scene of Peter with Christ and a cock: 2 fresco's, 114 sarcophagi Provoost (2011a) 48, cf. Koch (2000) 176–7)	≥250–400
Miracle at the <i>Porta speciosa</i>	Acts 3.1–10	1. Prudentius 2. Paulinus	1. <i>ditt.</i> 45,181–4 2. c. 20,241–51	1. ±390–405? 2. 406	–	–
Ananias and Sapphira	Acts 5.1–11	–	–	–	Rep1 463; Rep3 158, Von Schoenebeck (1936) T. 47, Lipsanotheca Brescia	±>360
Raising of Tabitha	Acts 9.36–41	–	–	–	Rep3 68; Rep3 497a, (cf. Testini 16)	2nd half fourth century (cf. 420–430)
Vision in Joppa	Acts 10.9–16	Prudentius	<i>ditt.</i> 46,185–8	±390–405?	<i>F435?</i> (cf. Paul—Vision of heaven)	375–380
Escape from prison	Acts 12.6–10	Paulinus	c. 15,260–5	398	Rep2 122	Theod. period
Giving to the poor (with Paul)	(cf. Acts 6.1–4)	Gr. Naz.	1,2,10 553–4	±381–90	–	–

Appendix 1 (cont.)

Canonical story about <i>Peter</i> referred to in art or poetry	Bible	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Conflict with Paul in Antioch	Gal 2.11–4	Gr. Naz.	I,2,25 222–8	±381–90	–	–
Bond with Mark	1 Petr 5.13	Gr. Naz.	I,1,21 1–2; I,1,25 5	±381–90	–	–
Discord in the congregation at Corinth	1 Cor 1.12	Gr. Naz.	II,1,13 154	±381–90	–	–
Bond with Jerusalem	Acts 8.14	Gr. Naz.	II,1,13 177–8	±381–90	–	–
Condemnation of inebriety and exuberance	1 Petr 4.3	Paulinus	c. 27,569	403	–	–
Canonical story about <i>the group of the twelve apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source (parallel Gospel texts not indicated)	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Fishers before vocation/fishers of men	Matt 4.18–22	1. Juvencus 2. Proba 3. Greg. Naz.	1. 1,421–34 2. <i>cento</i> 533–4; 544 3. II,1,12 192/ I,1,27 26; II,1,12 194–5 (cf. I,2,2 206)	1. 329 2. ±360 3. ±381–90	(Cf. “ <i>Peter—Fisher</i> ” above)	–

Canonical story about <i>the group of the twelve apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source (parallel Gospel texts not indicated)	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Sermon on the Mount	Matt 5-7; Luke 6.17-49	1. Juvenicus 2. Proba	1. 1,452-730 2. <i>cento</i> 469-96	1. 329 2. ±360	Rep1 110; Rep1 773b; Rep2 13; Rep3 169; F246; <i>Buschhausen</i> A69?	Pre-Const. period— ±400 (sarcophagi), 320-340 (catacombs)
Vocation of the twelve	Mark 3.13-9	Hilary (<i>cf. Juvenicus at individual apostles</i>)	<i>Hymn.</i> 29-30	±360	—	—
Without education	(Acts 4.13: only about John and Paul)	Gr. Naz.	11,1,12 265-6	±381-90	—	—
Jesus commissioning the apostles	Mark 6.7-13/ Matt 10.5-15/ Luke 22.35	1. Juvenicus 2. Gr. Naz.	1. 2,430-509 2. 11,1,12 199-205; 1,2,10 555-66	1. 329 2. ±381-90	Rep2 150; Rep3 219?	350-400
Storm at sea/ Jesus walking on the waves	Matt 8.23-7/ Matt 14.22-32	1. Juvenicus 2. Proba 3. Gr. Naz.	1. 2,25-42/ 3,93-128 2. <i>cento</i> 531-61 3. 11,1,69; 11,1,83 26	1. 329 2. ±360 3. ±381-90	—	—
Storm at sea	Matt 8.23-7	1. Juvenicus 2. Gr. Naz.	1. 2,25-42 2. 1,1,28; 1,2,23 7; 1,2,25 61; 11,1,1 11	1. 329 2. ±381-90	—	—

Appendix 1 (cont.)

Canonical story about <i>the group of the twelve apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source (parallel Gospel texts not indicated)	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Jesus walking on the waves	Matt 14.22–33	1. Juvenicus 2. Prudentius	1. 3,93–128 2. <i>c. Symm. praef.</i> 2,1–43	1. 329 2. 403/4	Dura Europos	±240–250
Jesus forecasts the Denial, his own death and the Resurrection	Matt 26.31–5; Matt 17.22–3	1. Comm. 2. Juvenicus	1. C. 549–52 2. 4,458–77	1. ± 250–60 2. 329	– (<i>but cf. scenes of Christ teaching the apostles</i>)	–
<i>Christ washing the feet</i>	<i>John</i> 13.1–20	–	–	–	<i>Rep</i> 1 679; <i>Rep</i> 3 53; <i>Rep</i> 3 412	±2366
Last Supper	Matt 26.17–30	1. Juvenicus 2. Proba	1. <i>evang.</i> 4,428–56 2. <i>cento</i> 580–99	1. 329 2. ±360	–	–
With Christ in Gethsemane	Matt 26.36–46	Juvenicus	4,478–510	329	<i>Rep</i> 3 42	±333–366
Jesus returns to his disciples after the Resurrection	A. Luke 24.33; Matt 28.18–20 B. John 20.20	A1. Juvenicus A2. Proba B1. Com. B2. Paulinus	A1. 4,784–801 A2. <i>cento</i> 661–2; <i>cento</i> 663–76 (speech of Christ) B1. C. 553–58 B2. <i>c.</i> 31,147–8	A1. 329 A2. ±360 B1. ±250–60 B2. 393–408	<i>Rep</i> 3 42	±333–366

Canonical story about <i>the group of the twelve apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source (parallel Gospel texts not indicated)	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Jesus teaching apostles 40 days before the Ascension	Acts 1.3 (cf. Matt 28.16–20)	1. Comm. 2. Juvenecus	1. C. 571–2 2. 4,784–801	1. ±250–60 2. 329	– (<i>but cf. scenes of Christ teaching the apostles</i>)	–
Apostles performing miracles after the Ascension	e.g. Acts 2.43	Comm.	C. 573–4	1. ±250–60	– (<i>but cf. miracles of Peter and Paul mentioned in apocryphal texts</i>)	–
<i>Farewell scene of Christ with disciples (?)</i>	(cf. Matt 28.16–20)	–	–	–	Rep1 241; Rep2 10; Rep3 32	300–333
Ascension	Acts 1.9–11	1. Comm. 2. Proba	1. C. 573 2. <i>cento</i> 682–6	1. ±250–60 2. ±360	Rep3 42, Rep3 219, Volbach no. 110	333–366, 350–400, ±400
Descent of the Holy Spirit	Acts 2.2–13	Paulinus	c. 27,95–106	403	–	–
Following Christ	Gospels, passim	1. Juvenecus 2. Gr. Naz.	1. <i>Ev.</i> 2. 1,1,27 27	1. 329 2. ±381–90	Sarcophagi (<i>passim</i> , depicting the apostles as bystanders of Christ's miracles), on ceramic (Ensoli/La Rocca (2010) no. 113)	3rd–4th century
Twelve wells in Elim	Exod 15.27	Prudentius	<i>ditt.</i> 14,53–6	±390–405?	–	–

Appendix 1 (cont.)

Canonical story about <i>the group of the twelve apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source (parallel Gospel texts not indicated)	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Prefigured by the stones in the Jordan	Josh 4.1–9	Prudentius	<i>ditt.</i> 15,53–6; <i>cath.</i> 12,177–80	±390–405?; ±390–405?	–	–
Names on the foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem	Rev 21.14 (Rev 21.12)	Prudentius (names above the gateways)	<i>psych.</i> 838–9	±405	–	–
Canonical story about <i>the other apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
<i>Andrew</i>						
Work as a fisherman and vocation	Matt 4.19	1. Juvenicus 2. Paulinus	1. 1,421–9 2. c. 27,406–9	1. 329 2. 403	–	–
<i>Bartholomew</i>	–	–	–	–	–	–
<i>James (Alphaei)</i>						
Transfiguration	Matt 17.1–9	1. Juvenicus 2. Ambrose 3. Gr. Naz.	1. 3,316–52 2. <i>Carm. tern. num.</i> 8; <i>titulus</i> 1 (x Peter) 3. 1,1,20 23–4	1. 329 2. ≤397 3. ±381–90	–	–

Canonical story about <i>the group of the twelve apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source (parallel Gospel texts not indicated)	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
<i>James (Zebedei)</i>						
Vocation	Matt 4.21–24.21–24.18–22	Juvenius	1,430–4	329	–	–
<i>John</i>						
Vocation/fisher of men	Matt 4.21–2	1. Juvenius 2. Ambrose	1. 1,430–4 2. Hymn 6,5–6	1. 329 2. ±386–400	Testini 116 (glass)	End of the 4th century
Transfiguration	Matt 17.1–9	1. Juvenius 2. Ambrose 3. Gr. Naz.	1. 3,316–52 2. <i>Carm. tern. num. 8; titulus 1</i> (x Peter) 3. I,1,20 23–4	1. 329 2. ≤397 3. ±381–90	–	–
Leaning on Christ's breast	John 13.23–5	Ambrose	Hymn 6,15; <i>titulus 2</i>	±386–400	–	–
Jesus speaking to Mary and John from the cross	John 19.25–6	Ambrose	Hymn 3,19–20	±386–400	–	–
The disciple whom Jesus loved	John 21.20–4	Ambrose	Hymn 6,1	±386–400	–	–
As evangelist	John	1. Ambrose 2. Gr. Naz. 3. Prudentius	1. Hymn 6,15–24 2. I,1,12 33; I,1,23 1 3. <i>cath.</i> 6,77–8	1. ±386–400 2. ±381–90 3. ±390–405?	Rep1 134; Rep3 65	End of the fourth century, 325–350

Appendix 1 (cont.)

Canonical story about <i>the group of the twelve apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source (parallel Gospel texts not indicated)	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Writer of letters	John	Gr. Naz.	I, 1, 12 37	±381–90	– (cf. “as evangelist”)	–
Handling frightening visions	Apocalypse	Prudentius	<i>cath.</i> 6, 117–20	±390–405?	–	–
Son of thunder	Mark 3.17	1. Ambrose 2. Amph.	1. Hymn 6, 2 2. <i>Seleuc.</i> 294	1. ±386–400 2. ±380	–	–
Citing John for his scripture	John 1.1	Paulinus	<i>c.</i> 22, 53	±400	–	–
<i>Judas Iscariot</i>						
Prophecy of Judas’ betrayal	Matt 26.21–5	1. Juvencus 2. Proba	1. 4, 432–45 2. <i>cento</i> 593–5	1. 329 2. ±360	–	–
At the Last Supper	Matt 26.20–5	Prudentius	<i>psych.</i> 531–2	±405	–	–
Betrayal (Judas kiss)	Matt 26.49	1. Juvencus 2. Hilary	1. 4, 511–21 2. <i>Hymn.</i> 31–32	1. 329 2. ±360	Rep2 152; Rep3 42; Rep3 62 (lid); Rep3 83A; Rep3 199A; Rep3 498	≥325–±400
Betrayal for money	Matt 26.15	1. Juvencus 2. Gr. Naz. 3. Prudentius	1. 4, 626–7 2. I, 2, 15 3. <i>ditt.</i> 39, 153–5; <i>psych.</i> 529–34	1. 329 2. ±381–90 3. ±390–405? ±405	– (cf. <i>BM ivory</i>)	– (420–430)

Canonical story about <i>the group of the twelve apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source (parallel Gospel texts not indicated)	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Murderer of Christ	Gospels, story of the Passion	Gr. Naz.	I,2,6 22; I,2,1 486; II,1,13	±381–90	–	–
Death of Judas	Matt 27.8; Acts 1.18	1. Juvencus 2. Prudentius	1. 4,626–31 2. <i>ditt.</i> 39,155–6; <i>psych.</i> 535	1. 329 2. ±390–405?; ±405	Rep3 42, Lipsanoteca	333–366, 386
Matthew						
Vocation	Matt 9.9	Juvenius	2,95–8	329	–	–
A publican	Matt 9.9	1. Juvencus 2. Gr. Naz.	1. 2,95 2. II,1,12 192; II,1,12 220–1; II,1,19 92	1. 329 2. ±381–90	–	–
Writer of a gospel	–	1. Gr. Naz. 2. Prudentius	1. I,1,12 31; I,1,18 13; I,1,18 34; I,1,20 1; II,1,12 220 2. <i>apoth.</i> 981	1. ±381–90 2. 396–7	Rep1 134; Rep3 65	325–350, end of the fourth century
Matthias						
–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Nathanael						
Vocation	John 1.45–51	Juvenius	2,99–126	329	–	–
Philip						
Vocation	John 1.43–4	Juvenius	2,99–100	329	–	–
Preaches Christ to Nathanael	John 1.45–51	Juvenius	2,102–26	329	–	–
With eunuch	Acts 8.26–39				F435	375–380

Appendix 1 (cont.)

Canonical story about <i>the group of the twelve apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Biblical source (parallel Gospel texts not indicated)	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
<i>Simon</i>						
—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Thaddeus/ Judas/Lebbaeus</i>						
—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Thomas</i>						
Jesus appearing to the apostles and Thomas after his resurrection	John 20.19; 24–7	1. Comm. 2. Paulinus	1. C. 559–62 2. c. 27,415–423; c. 31,149–216	1. ±250–60 2. 403; 393–408	Rep2 249; Rep2 250	350–75 and id. or 366–400
Fatalistically addressing the apostles	John 11.16	Juvenius	4,330–2	329	—	—

Appendix 2

Overview of Non-Canonical References to the Apostles in Art and Poetry

Non-canonical story about Paul referred to in art or poetry	Possible source	Poet mentioning the passage	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Paul speaking with a lion	<i>Acta Pauli</i> 6	Com./ Dam.(?)	CA 627–8/ ep. 1,19(?)	±250–60/ 366–84	–	–
Paul starving and freezing	<i>Acta Pauli et Theclae</i> 21–5	Gregorius	1,2,3 88	±381–90	–	–
Water miracle	–	–	–	–	catacomb of Petrus and Marcellinus/ <i>Rep</i> 1 45	4th c., 325–350
Paul and Thecla	<i>Acta Pauli et Theclae</i>	–	–	–	<i>Rep</i> 1 832, silver reliquary (cf. Volbach 117)	4th c., 400
<i>Dominus legem dat</i>	–	–	–	–	mosaics, sarcophagi, <i>arti minori</i> (Testini 70; 194)	>350
Paul teaching	(<i>Acta Pauli et Theclae</i>)	–	–	–	Carrand diptych	±400
Paul's arrest by Thamyris	<i>Acta Pauli et Theclae</i> 15	–	–	–	<i>Rep</i> 3 297	±400
Meeting Peter	<i>Acta Petri et Pauli</i> 24, <i>Passio sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli</i> 3	–	–	–	1 fresco, 1 relief	±400
Martyrdom	1 Clemens 5, <i>Acta Pauli, Martyrium Pauli, Passio apostoli Pauli, Passio</i>	Com./ Damasus/ Ambrose/ Gregory/ Prudentius/ Paulinus	CA 827–8/ <i>Ep.</i> 20/ Hymn 12,4/ 11,1,14 64/ <i>perist.</i> 12,21–8;	>386/366– 384/?/ ±400/ ±400/ 396; 405	Depicted on sarcophagi and gold glasses	>350

Appendix 2 (cont.)

Non-canonical story about <i>Paul</i> referred to in art or poetry	Possible source	Poet mentioning the passage	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
	<i>apostolorum Petri et Pauli, Acta Petri et Pauli</i>		<i>c. Symm.</i> 2,669–70; <i>perist.</i> 2,469–72/ <i>c.</i> 13,26–30 and 65–6; 19,50–6			
Saving of Martinianus	–	Paulinus	<i>c.</i> 24,263–98	±400	–	–
Non-canonical story about <i>Peter</i> referred to in art or poetry	Possible source	Poet mentioning the passage	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Peter speaking to a dog	<i>Acta Petri</i> 9	Com.	<i>CA</i> 626	±250–60	Rep2 151; Rep2 152; Rep2 225; Rep3 304; Rep3 418	End of the 4th c.
Peter eating lupines	–	Gregory	1,2,10 551	±381–90	–	–
Water miracle	<i>Martyrium Petri</i> 5	–	–	–	app. 150 sarcophagi, 75 frescoes (mostly with Moses, cf. Buschhausen A60, but see Mazzei (2010) 203) and 25 gold glasses and other small objects (e.g. Testini 117 (?); 197–8)	3rd–5th c.

Non-canonical story about <i>Peter</i> referred to in art or poetry	Possible source	Poet mentioning the passage	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Healing a blind widow	<i>Acta Petri</i> 20	–	–	–	Rep1 12	300–333
<i>Healing blind women</i>	<i>Acta Petri</i> 25–8	–	–	–	<i>Rep2</i> 122	330–370
<i>Dominus legem dat</i>	–	–	–	–	mosaics, sarcophagi, <i>arti minori</i> (Testini 70; 194), Buschhausen B12	>350
Peter reading	–	–	–	–	sarcophagi	4th c.
Meeting Paul	<i>Acta Petri et Pauli</i> 24, <i>Passio sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli</i> 3	–	–	–	1 fresco, 1 relief	±400
Arrest	<i>Acta Petri</i> 36	–	–	–	sarcophagi	4th c.
Martyrdom	1 Clemens 5, <i>Martyrium Petri, Passio apostolorum Petri et Pauli, Acta Petri et Pauli</i>	Com./ Damasus/ Ambrose/ Gregory/ Prudentius/ Paulinus	CA 827–8/ <i>Ep.</i> 20/ Hymn 12,4/ 11,1,14 64/ <i>perist.</i> 12,11–20; <i>c. Symm.</i> 2,669–70; <i>perist.</i> 2,469–72/ <i>c.</i> 13,26–30 and 65–6; 19,50–6	>386/366– 384/?/ ±400/ ±400/ 396; 405	Many sarcophagi and gold glasses	4th c.
Speaking to the disciples after Christ's crucifixion	–	Proba	<i>cento</i> 642–7	±360	–	–

Appendix 2 (cont.)

Non-canonical story about <i>the group of the twelve apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Possible source	Poet mentioning the passage	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Non-canonical story about <i>the other apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Possible source	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Andrew						
Missionary work in Argos	<i>Acta Andreae</i>	Paulinus	C. 27,406–10; 19,78 (cf. 19,336)	403; 405 (id.)	–	–
Martyrdom	<i>Acta Andreae</i> (54)	pseudo-Damasus	Hymn 70 (Ihm 1895)	probably fifth century or later	pyxis from Pola (B20)	±400
Bartholomew						
<i>Mission in India</i>	<i>Acta Bartholomaei</i>	<i>Claudian</i>	<i>C.m. 50,4</i> (?)	402	–	–
Used the gospel of Matthew to preach in India	Eus. <i>h.e.</i> 5,10,3/ Hier. <i>vir. ill.</i> 36	–	–	–	sarcophagus (Schlunk/Hauschild T.21)	400
James (Alphaei)						
–	–	–	–	–	–	–
James (Zebedei)						
–	–	–	–	–	–	–
John						
Surviving a cauldron of boiling oil	Tert. <i>De praescr. haer.</i> 36,3	Ambrose	Hymn 6	>386	–	–
In Ephese	<i>Acta Iohannis</i> 37–45	Paulinus	C. 19,95–7	405	–	–

Non-canonical story about <i>the other apostles</i> referred to in art or poetry	Possible source	Poet mentioning the story	Poem in which the story is mentioned	Date of the poem	Work(s) of art mentioning the story	Date of the work(s) of art
Judas Iscariot						
–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Matthew						
Working in Parthia	– (several other regions mentioned in apocrypha on Matthew)	Paulinus	C. 19,82	405	–	–
Transmitted his gospel to Bartholomew	Eus. <i>h.e.</i> 5,10,3/ Hier. <i>vir. ill.</i> 36	–	–	–	sarcophagus (Schlunk/Hauschild T.21)	400
Matthias						
–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Nathanael						
–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Philip						
Working in Phrygia	<i>Acta Philippi</i>	Paulinus	C. 19,82	405	–	–
Simon						
–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Thaddeus/ Judas/Lebbaeus						
Working in Libya	– (missionary work in the East is mentioned in apocrypha on Thaddeus)	Paulinus	C. 19,82	405	–	–
Thomas						
Mission in India	<i>Acta Thomaei</i>	1. <i>Claudian</i> (?) 2. Paulinus	1. <i>C.m.</i> 50,4 2. C. 19,81	1. 402 2. 405	–	–

Appendix 3

Figures



FIGURE 1 *Epitaph of Aberkios, late 2nd–early 3rd century, marble, 64×42×40 cm, Musei Vaticani, Lapidario Cristiano, inv. 31643.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 2 *Cimitile, Basilica Vetus, view on the Basilica Vetus from the area of the former Basilica Nova. Felix's tomb was visible behind the current third arcade from the left.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 3 *Detail of the front of the sarcophagus of the Trinity: the creation of Eve, with bystanders, (Rep3 38), ca. 325, marble, 105×205×109 cm, Musée de l'Arles antique, Arles, inv. PAP.7400.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 4 *Front of the sarcophagus of Concordius with Christ seated amidst apostles and evangelists, (Rep3 65), late 4th century, marble, 60×219×80cm, Musée de l'Arles antique, Arles, inv. FAN.92.00.2491.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 5 *Detail of the front of the sarcophagus of Concordius (fig. 4): apostles, evangelists and men in the background.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 6 *Detail of the right side of the lid of the sarcophagus of Concordius (fig. 4): the apostles and scripture.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 7 *Detail of a crater from the 4th century with Christ and some of his apostles Museo Nazionale Romano Palazzo Massimo, Rome, inv. 67629.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 8 Apse mosaic with Christ seated on a throne and surrounded by the apostles in front of the heavenly Jerusalem ca. 400, mosaic, Santa Pudenziana, Rome.

PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 9 Mosaic with Christ amidst his apostles ca. 400, mosaic, Sant'Aquilino chapel (San Lorenzo basilica), Milan.

PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 10 Front of the sarcophagus of Stilicho with Christ and apostles (Rep2 150), 380–400, marble, 114 × 230 × 230 cm, Basilica di Sant'Ambrogio, Milan.
PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 11 *Back of the sarcophagus of Stilicho with Christ and apostles (fig. 10) with front lid, Musei Vaticani, Museo Pio Cristiano, Rome.*
 PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 12 *Short side of fig. 10: depiction of the commissioner of the sarcophagus (third man from the right), Musei Vaticani, Museo Pio Cristiano, Rome.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 13 *Relief slab with depiction of the Sermon on the Mount. Fragment of relief slab (Repi 773b), late 3rd–early 4th century, marble, 92×113 cm, Museo Nazionale Romano Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 14 *Example of the scene of Peter, Christ and the cock combined with that of the cure of the bleeding woman. Detail of the front of Rep2 138, ca. 366–400, marble, 65×214×10 cm, Rijksmuseum voor Oudheden, Leiden.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 15 Back lid of the Lipsanototheca, (Völbach no. 107), late 4th century, ivory, 32 × 22 × 24 cm, Museo Civico Cristiano, Brescia.

PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 16 *Lid of the Lipsanoteca 32×24 cm (fig. 15).*

PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 17 *Fragment of a sarcophagus (Rep3 154) with the traditio clavium (on the right), ca. 370–400, marble, 52×80 cm, Musée lapidaire, Avignon, inv. 123.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 18 *Painting from the house church in Dura Europos with Peter's attempt to walk on the waves (right corner below), Yale University Art Gallery, Yale.*

PHOTO: DORA EUPOPOS. SALHIE OF EUPHRATES, P. 67 (CATALOGUE OF PAINTINGS FROM DURA EUPOPOS, AVAILABLE AT THE THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF DAMASCUS, NO BIBLIOGRAPHICAL RECORDS).

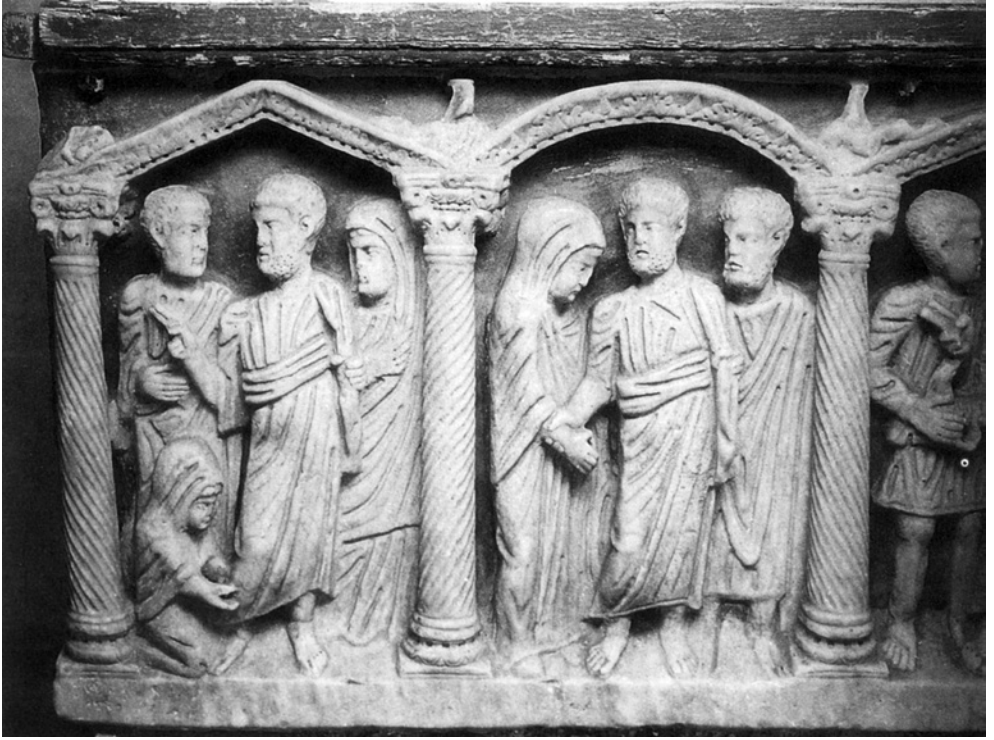


FIGURE 19 *Miracles of Peter* (Rep2 122), ca. 350–70, marble, 75×211×68 cm, Crypt of the Fermo Cathedral, Fermo.

PHOTO: DRESKEN-WEILAND (1998) TAFEL 43,2.

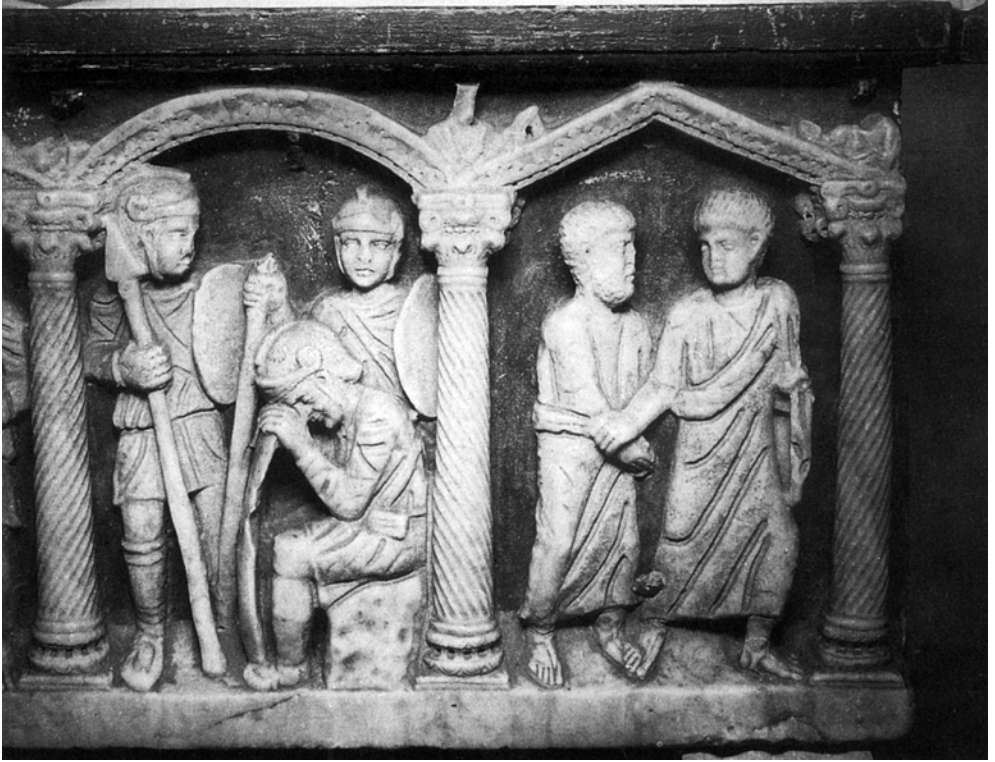


FIGURE 20 *Last two niches at the right from the sarcophagus from Fermo (fig. 19).*
PHOTO: DRESKEN-WEILAND (1998) TAFEL 43,4.



FIGURE 21 *Depiction of a Dominus legem dat scene in the three niches in the middle, Arles, Sarcophagus (Rep3 53), ca. 370–400, marble, 72×224×52 cm, Musée de l'Arles antique, Arles, inv. FAN.92.00.2487.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 22 *Left short side of the sarcophagus of Sidonius with the raising of Tabitha (Rep3 497a), ca. 370–400, marble, 78×105 cm, Crypt of St. Maximin (Ste. Marie Madeleine), Saint Maximin la Sainte Baume. Musical instrument on the left.*
PHOTO: CHRISTERN-BRIESENICK (2003) TAFEL 121,1.



FIGURE 23 Cubiculum Leonis, *epiphany of Christ to Paul* (?). F435/Com 5, 375–380, wall painting, arcosolium in the Cubiculum Leonis (Commodilla catacomb), Rome. PHOTO: DECKERS, MIETKE ET AL. (1994B) FARBTAFEL 31A.



FIGURE 24 Cubiculum Leonis, *Philip converting the eunuch* F435/Com 5, 375–380, wall painting, arcosolium in the Cubiculum Leonis (Commodilla catacomb), Rome.
 PHOTO: DECKERS, MIETKE ET AL. (1994B) FARBTAFEL 31B.



FIGURE 25 Marseille, St. Victor, crypt of St.-Mauront, depiction of the conversion of Paul in the first niche (?). Front of Rep3 291, late 4th century, 60×210×65 cm, marble, Crypt of St.-Mauront (St. Victor), Marseille.
 PHOTO: CHRISTERN-BRIESENICK (2003) TAFEL 73,2.



FIGURE 26 *Carrand diptych with the miracle of Paul on Malta. Right leaf of the Carrand diptych (Volbach no. 108), late 4th century, ivory, 30×14 cm, Museo Bargello, Florence.*
 PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.

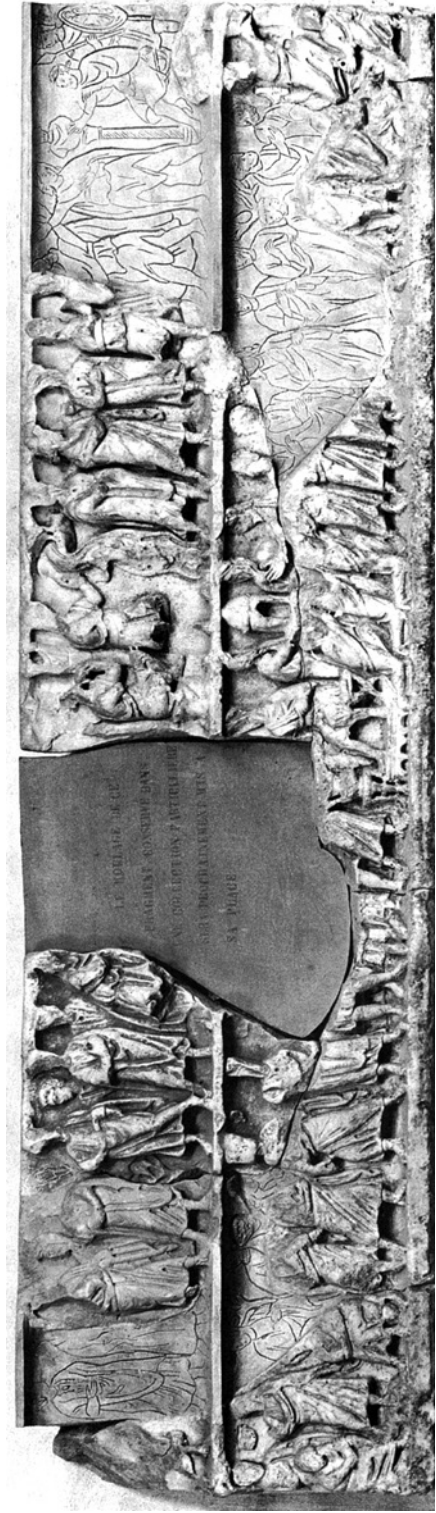


FIGURE 27 Servanne sarcophagus with the hanging of Judas (right corner below), (Rep3 42), ca. 330–370, marble, 60×220×20 cm, Musée de l'Arles antique, Arles, inv. FAN.92.00.2503.
PHOTO: CHRISTERN-BRIESENICK (2003) TAFEL 15, 5.



FIGURE 28 *Christ and three evangelists in a boat with their names painted, Fragment of Repi 134, 325–350, marble, 20×46 cm, Musei Vaticani, Museo Pio Cristiano, Rome, inv. 233. PHOTO: AUTHOR.*



FIGURE 29 Farewell scene of Christ and the apostles (?). Fragment B of Rep3 32. 300–325, marble, 70×143 cm, Musée de l'Arles antique, Arles.
PHOTO: CHRISTERN-BRIENICK (2003) TAFEL 10, 2.



FIGURE 30 *Reidersche Tafel with the Ascension* (Volbach no. 110), ca. 400, ivory, 19×12 cm, Bayerische National-Museum, Munich.

PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 31 *Fragments of the lid of a sarcophagus with sheep and the names of the apostles painted above, 5th century, marble. Arheološki Muzej u Splitu, Split.*
 PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 32 *Detail of fig. 31: sheep with the names of Paul, James, Judas Thaddeus, Simon, Tomas and Matthew, Arheološki Muzej u Splitu, Split.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 33 *Detail of fig. 31: sheep with the names of Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip and Bartholomew, Arheološki Muzej u Splitu, Split.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 34 *Detail of the front of a sarcophagus (Rep158): the water miracle and reading scene, marble, Musée de l'Arles antique, Arles.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 35 *Detail of the front of a sarcophagus (Rep1 58): the arrest/martyrdom of Peter, late 4th century, marble, 58/200 cm, Musei Vaticani, Museo Pio Cristiano, Rome.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 36 *Front of the sarcophagus of the Dioscuri (Rep 3 51), ca. 370–400, marble, 62x206x76 cm, Musée de l'Arles antique, Arles.*

PHOTO: CHRISTERN-BRIESENICK (2003) TAFEL 18,1.



FIGURE 37 *Short side of fig. 36 with Peter reading.*

PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 38 *The apostles with stars, fragment of the front of Rep1 31, ca. 270–300, marble, 45×48 cm, Musei Vaticani, Museo Pio Cristiano, Rome.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 39 *Rome, catacombe nell'ex Vigna Chiaraviglio (detail), meeting of Peter and Paul, 4th century, wall painting, Catacombe nell'ex Vigna Chiaraviglio, Rome.*
PHOTO: UGGERI (2010) 221 (FIG. 127).



FIGURE 40 *The martyrdom of Paul. Ship and reed depicted in the background at the right of Paul's head. Detail of the front of the Anastasis sarcophagus (Rep1 61), 340–350, marble, 62×206×73 cm, Musei Vaticani, Museo Pio Cristiano, Rome.*
 PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 41 Detail of the sarcophagus from Berja: Peter and Paul before Nero, 325–335, marble, 210 × 53 cm, Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid.

PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 42 *Front of the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus (Repl 680). 359, marble, 141×243×144 cm, Museo Storico del Tesoro della Basilica di San Pietro, Vatican City.*
PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 43 Sarcophagus with (among others) Peter and the dog of Simon Magus (tabula, right corner) and the Judas kiss (right corner, below) Rep2 152 (front), late 4th–early 5th century, marble, 69×214×81 cm, crypt of the San Giovanni in Valle, Verona.
 PHOTO: DRESKEN-WEILAND (1998) TAFEL 64, 1.



FIGURE 44 *Fragment of a sarcophagus lid with Paul and Thecla (Repi 832), early 4th century, marble, 26x54 cm, Musei Vaticani, Museo Pio Cristiano, Rome.*
PHOTO: UGGERI (2010) 210 (FIG. 121).



FIGURE 45 *Small pilaster of a pluteus (liturgical enclosure) with an apostle, 4th century, marble, Musei Vaticani, Museo Pio Cristiano, Rome, inv. 31409.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.



FIGURE 46 *First two niches of the sarcophagus of Chrysanthus and Daria: Arrest of Paul and Paul with Thamyris and Thecla (Rep3 297), late 4th century, marble, 58×213×34 cm, crypt of the Notre-Dame-de-confession (St. Victor), Marseille.*
 PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 47 *Mosaic with the Dominus legem dat. ca. 400, San Giovanni in Fonte (Santa Restituta), Naples.*

PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 48 *Dominus pacem dat*, mid 4th century, mosaic, Santa Costanza, Rome.
 PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 49 *Traditio clavium (?)*, mid 4th century, mosaic, Santa Costanza, Rome.
 PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.



FIGURE 50 *Gold glass with Peter, Paul, pastor and Damasus, (Morey no. 106), late 4th century, glass, Bibliotheca apostolica vaticana, Vatican City.*
 PHOTO: CKD, RU NIJMEGEN.

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